



**CURA RESOURCE COLLECTION**

Center for Urban and Regional Affairs  
University of Minnesota  
330 Humphrey Center

**Waconia, Minnesota**  
Hilltop Town with a *View*



WACONIA, MINNESOTA: HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW  
The Search for Gathering Place

Early in February of 1994, thirteen students, guided by two professors from the Department of Landscape Architecture, College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, University of Minnesota, began what was to become a multi-week exploration of design problems and potentials in the city of Waconia. The initial focus of our study was Waconia's downtown as a place for gathering, but the pedagogical boundaries of the study were intentionally kept loose, and the students quickly recognized that if they were to speak intelligently about the town's downtown, they needed also to look at its lakes, its schools, its housing (old and new) its medical complex, its fairgrounds and its Highway 5 environment. They also embraced enthusiastically the opportunity to engage many town residents--young children and teens, young parents and senior citizens, merchants and shoppers--in an ongoing dialogue about the hopes and concerns these folks shared when they were asked by our students to talk about Waconia.

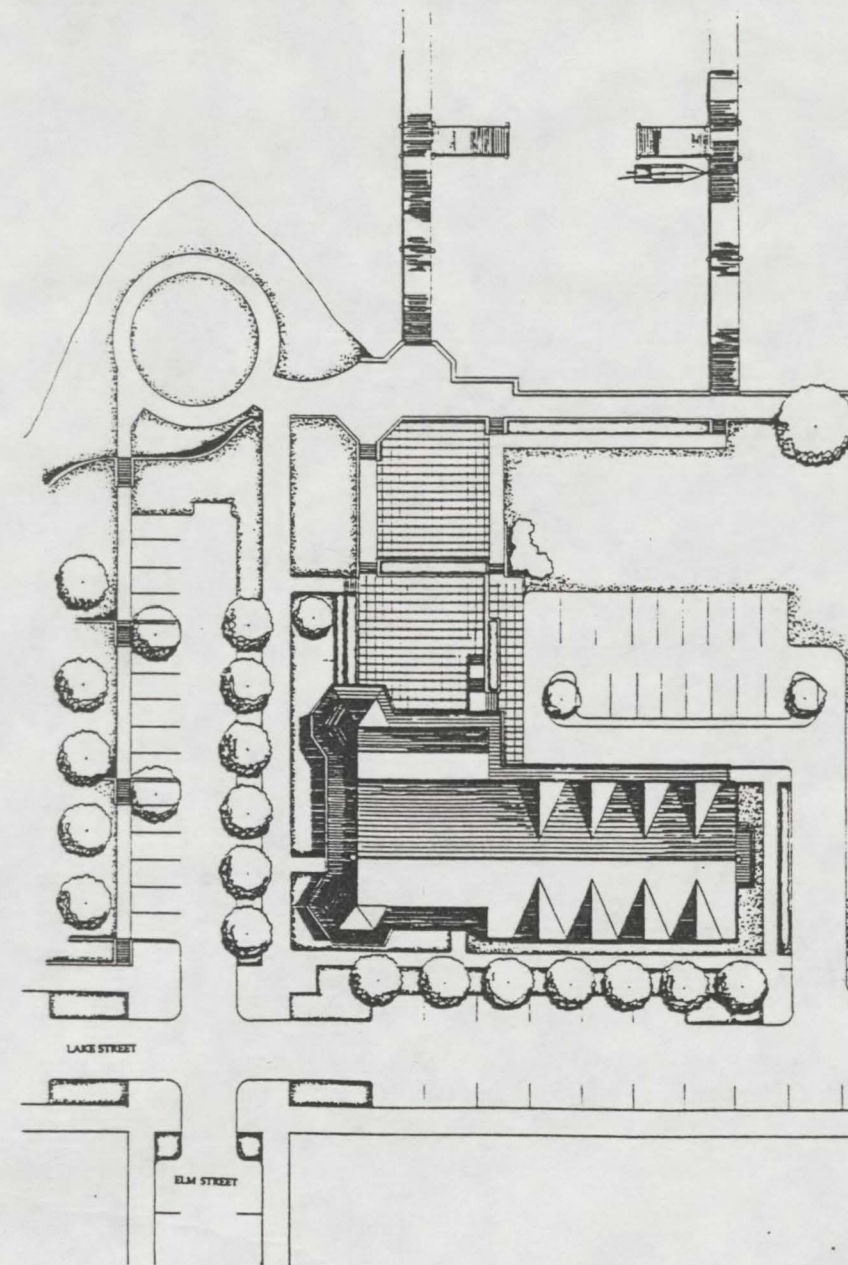
For a five week period, from February 7th to March 14th, the students collected information, made proposals, heard comments from townsfolk about their ideas, and refined their design thoughts. ElVaughn Williams, from Waconia Horizons, and Nancy Lenhart, from the Minnesota Extension Service, served as the primary community liaisons between the University and the community, helping to arrange gatherings, getting notices in the news media and arranging space for the student presentations. The effort was exciting, and we believe it has raised good questions for the community to consider as it seeks good strategies for its future. We know it has been a valuable exercise for the University students whose proposals you will find in the illustrated pages that constitute the heart of this document.

The student work shown here in booklet form was originally done on 30" x 40" sheets. It has been reduced to this 11" x 17" format to make it easier to handle, and therefore, hopefully, of more use as a catalyst for Waconians wishing to move from questions to actions in the shaping of a better future for the community.

Each proposal is presented on two pages. Most students worked alone to prepare their proposals, but four of the thirteen, Jim Galbrecht and Monica Mogren as one team, and Erik Olsen and Aaron Pearson as another, instead chose to join forces. Submitting their work as pairs, they are represented here by four pages of materials per team.

The presentations are meant to speak for themselves, but a few comments in this section may offer some helpful highlights for readers.

- A number of the students were anxious to enhance links between the old town and the newer development south of Highway 5. Liz Anderson, with her biking/hiking trail and her pedestrian/bike bridge over the highway, offered one idea for this linkage. Patrick Andrews and Bob Near, with proposals for a selective extending of the street grid south of Highway 5, offered another.
- There were also strong ideas for upgrading the visual environment of Highway 5 as it passes through Waconia's city limits. A sense of gateways and a major increase in roadside vegetation appear in the Steve White scheme and in the team scheme of Jim Galbrecht and Monica Mogren.
- Ideas for linking the highway and the downtown are offered by Cory Tauer, Ming Zhong, Jianwei Li, Liz Anderson and Finette Magnuson.





- Suggestions for enhancing the pedestrian life of the downtown were particularly well conveyed in the team schemes of Aaron Pearson/Erik Olsen, Jim Galbrecht/Monica Mogren, and in the individual proposals put forth by Cory Tauer, Finette Magnuson, Patrick Andrews, Steve White, Nathan Anderson, Ming Zhong and Jianwei Li.
- Powerful visual links between downtown and Lake Waconia were proposed in the designs of each of the Andersons, Li, White, Pearson and Olsen, and Galbrecht and Mogren; and various thoughts on how to treat the lake shore are found in drawings of Finette, Jim and Monica, Erik and Aaron, and Ming.

A number of the students also were thoroughly enthralled with the beauty, and with the character, of the many Waconia brick and frame homes that reach back to the turn of the century and beyond; some students even suggested pursuing the notion of an historic homes tour, not unlike the one offered in Stillwater. In addition, there were proposals for street trees, shrub and flower plantings, better signage, more banners and awnings, seating in attractive settings on widened sidewalks and better management of parking, along with one recommendation for a small hotel beside the lake.

The student ideas often were aided in their development by thoughts and reactions from merchants, civic and government leaders and other community residents who attended presentations/discussion sessions at Waconia on February 23rd and March 14th, first in the high school and then at the Extension Service Office. Thus, what is presented here in these pages can be seen as a set of thoughts growing out of a dialogue, thoughts now made accessible enough to help the dialogue continue. We hope the questions these ideas raise will serve Waconia well as a basis for more definitive, future planning and design efforts.

It has been our pleasure, as representatives of the University of Minnesota, to contribute to this undertaking.

Cordially,

*Roger D. Clemence Roger B. Martin*

Roger D. Clemence and Roger B. Martin,  
Professors, College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture,  
for the University of Minnesota Extension Service, and for the thirteen students of  
Landscape Architecture 8222, Winter, 1994:

Liz Anderson	Bob Near
Nathan Anderson	Erik Olsen
Patrick Andrews	Aaron Pearson
Jim Galbrecht	Cory Tauer
Jianwei Li	Steve White
Finette Magnuson	Ming Zhong
Monica Mogren	

P.S. The notes in this document appearing under the February 14th date were prepared by the students whose names appear beneath the date. They offer a good sense of the valuable interaction our students had with the community in their February 14 meetings.



SOUTH ELEVATION

THE PIERS PROVIDE LAKE ACCESS FOR  
THE BOATING COMMUNITY, TO THE  
DOWNTOWN.



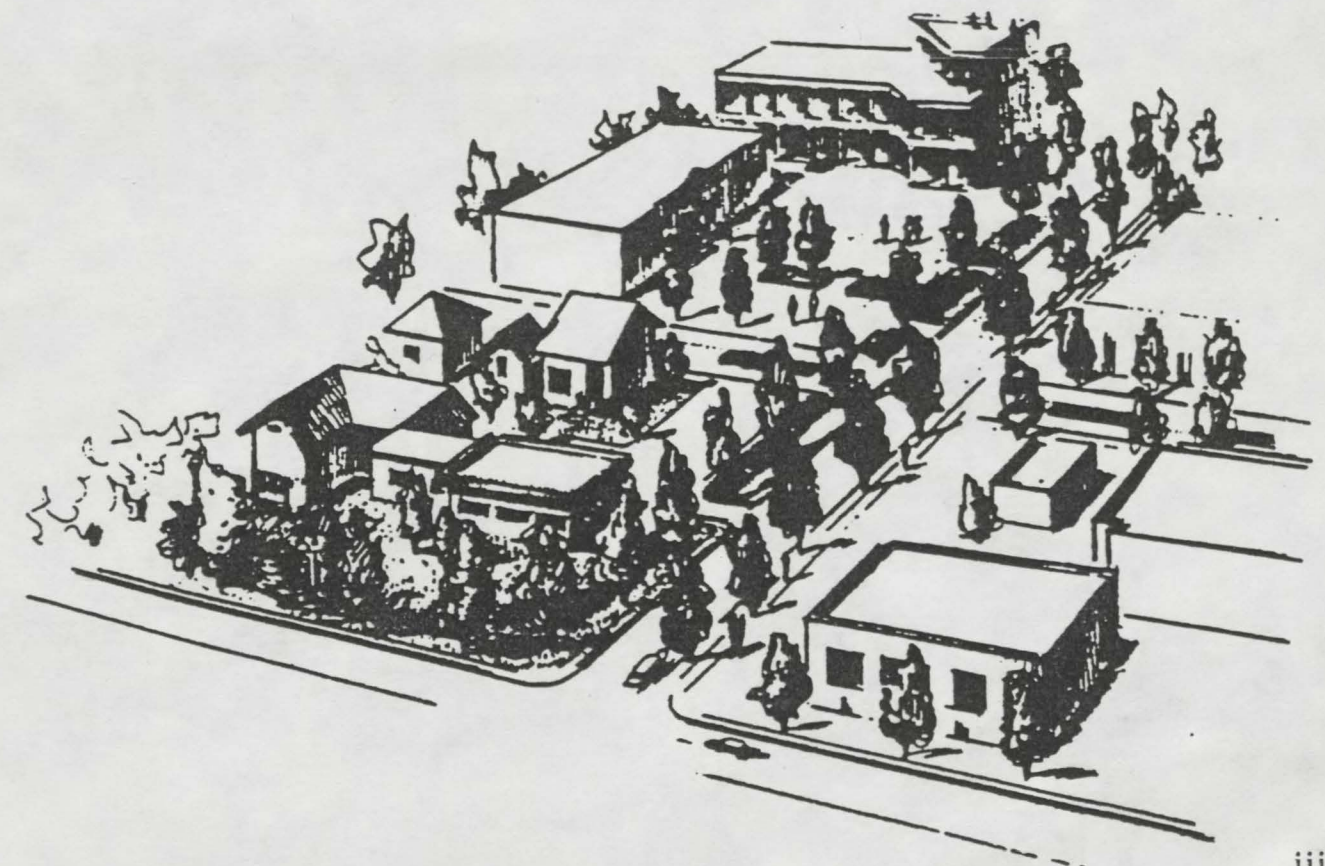
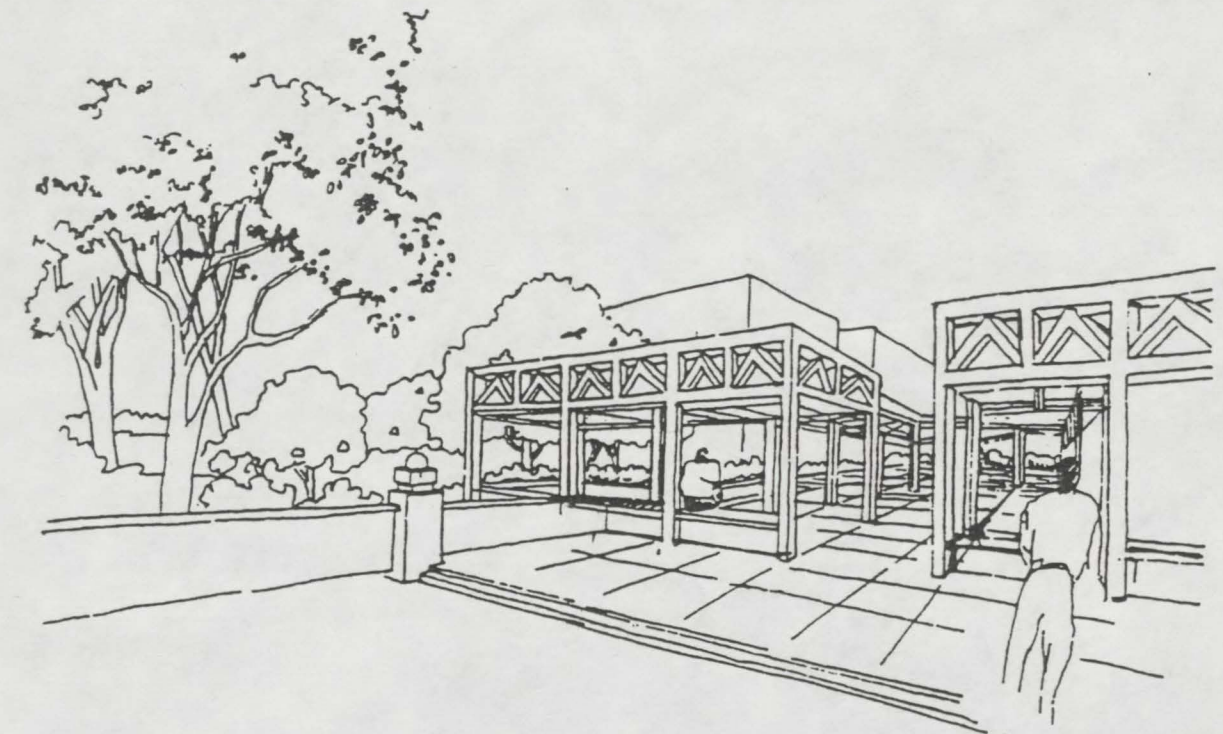
NORTH ELEVATION

HOTEL AND SHORELINE PARK PROVIDE  
COMMON GROUND FOR THE CITY AND  
THE LAKE.



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February 14, 1994

Waconia, Minnesota

Liz Anderson and Erik Olsen

re: community meeting with business people and senior citizens

This is a summary of the information we obtained from interviewing the above members of the community of Waconia.

Reasons given for coming to downtown Waconia:

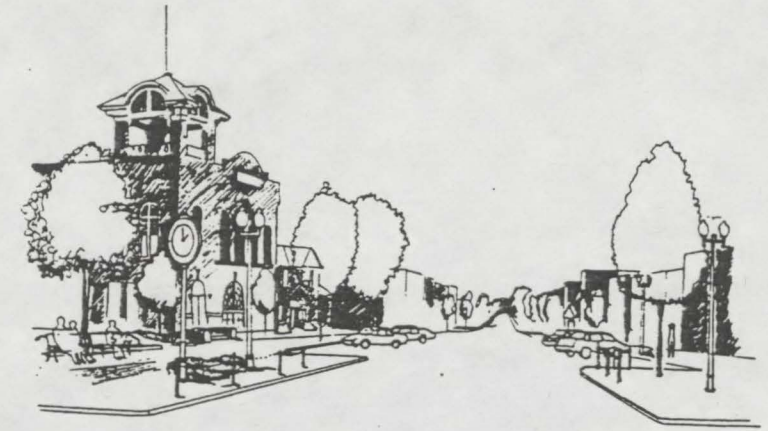
- Groceries, Yetzers, Ford dealer, hardware store.
- Walk to town or drive and then walk to various destinations.
- Lots of people just like to walk around town.

Observations on Waconia cited by these community members:

- If you meet people, just stop to talk on the street. No place to gather except by the flag pole at Macs. A few benches are there.
- Paul would like to see some flowers in town. Right now there are a couple of families that take care of a flower bed in the park.
- Need some plazas to accommodate ten to twelve people and have a picnic bench.
- Need to unify the look of the town. Express the flavor of the lake.
- Build apartments overlooking the lake.
- Elm St. would be a good street to enter the town. Olive doesn't have anything special.
- Lack of sidewalks make walking difficult.
- Feel the new suburbs are part of Waconia. It's thought the new people feel a part of Waconia.
- Need to make a connection to the high school.
- Lots of people like to drive around the lake.
- Pine Point Park should be connected.
- A typical photo that might express Waconia would be:
  - From the top of the hill looking down to the lake, marina, island and peninsula.
  - From the west on the peninsula by the grove of maple trees, capturing the town on the hill.
  - The island and the lake.
  - The church spires.

Other information discussed:

- The city owns three buildings and one lot on the north side of Main St. west of Olive.
- City has right of way on two streets down to the lake shore - Vine & Pine - 66 feet where the storm sewer empties in.
- Talking about a community center at Crown College.
- Also at fairgrounds, plus add a historical museum.
- Had a teen center at city hall. Worked for a while but then became the "nerd" center and kids wouldn't go.
- Had an ice cream place next to the theater that the young people went to, but then it became a little kids place and they stopped going. Kids seem to be fickle.
- Have patio eating at the marinas. Never have had it in the town. Tourists seem to bring everything they need and don't stop in the town much.
- Theater was built with the agreement of the city to provide a specific number of parking lots including the two level ramp, the lot east of Duebers, and the lot by the open pond area.



HISTORIC STRUCTURES HELP DEFINE  
RECOGNIZABLE LANDMARKS IN THE  
LANDSCAPE. BOTH PEDESTRIAN AND  
VEHICLE CAN RESPOND.



VIEW TO OLD WACONIA FROM NEW CITY PARK  
ON 10TH STREET



February 14, 1994  
 Waconia, Minnesota  
 Nathan Anderson and Bob Near  
 re: community meeting with business people and young adults

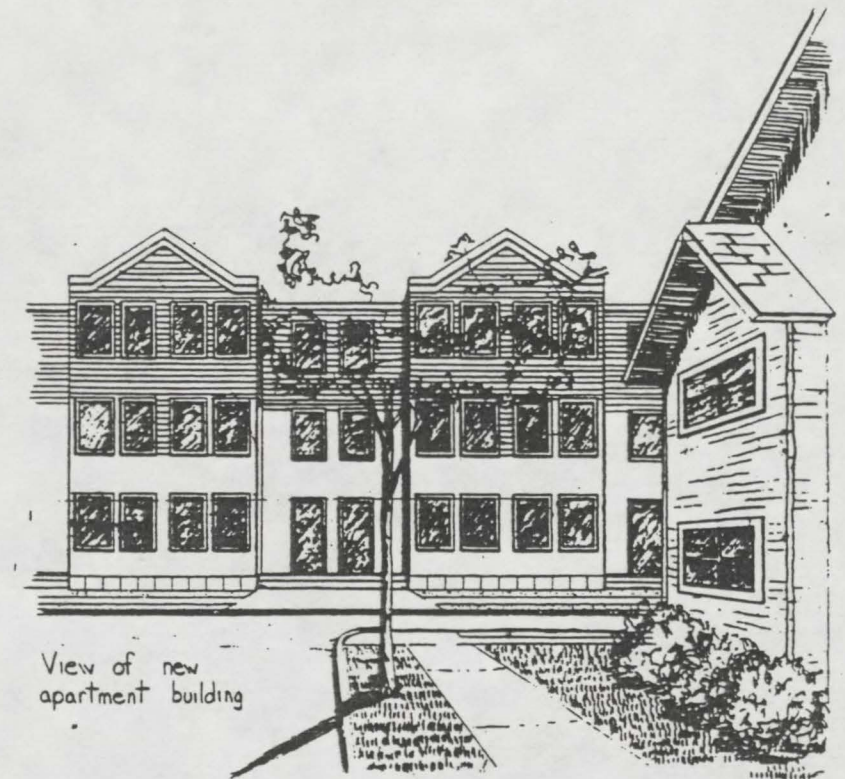
The following is a summary of information we compiled from meeting with various people from the community of Waconia.

Current needs for improving Waconia as cited by these community members:

- Improve streetscapes
- Need signage off of Hwy. 5 to downtown
- North side of Main St. needs improvement
- Problem with lake access
- Pedestrian connections are lacking:
  - to the beach to the northeast
  - to the lakeshore
  - to the new high school
- Desire for bikeways incorporated with the pedestrian ways
- Safety concern for pedestrians throughout Waconia

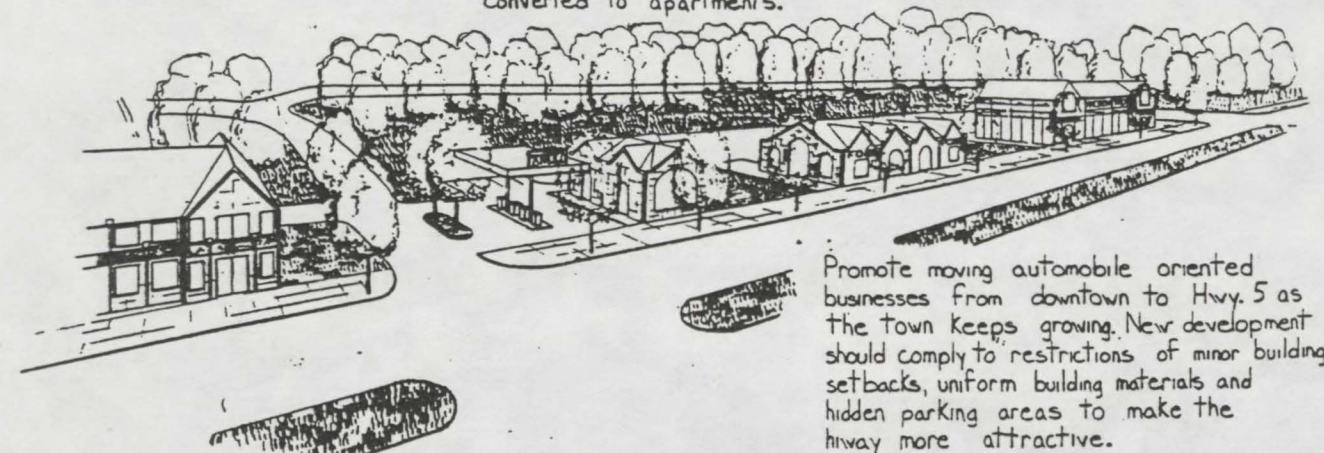
Areas of concern:

- Realize places like Eden Prairie, Chaska, etc. have little identity because of lack of downtown mental image---how can you strengthen Waconia's image??
- Reconstruction of CTY#10 to #32 essentially allows a bypass of downtown.
- Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) --these new areas are frustrating....no sidewalks, little connection to the grid of the city.
- Highway 5 is splitting Waconia into two "personalities" ---similar to what has happened in Young America.
- Parking downtown is a problem, especially since the new movie theater was built.



View of new apartment building

Move fairgrounds to area on hiway 5, next to new high school. This will allow for more parking during the event at the high school and less downtown where it causes problems. Since it would be closer to the school, school buses could be stored at the fairgrounds and the current site for storing buses could be converted to apartments.



Promote moving automobile oriented businesses from downtown to Hwy. 5 as the town keeps growing. New development should comply to restrictions of minor building setbacks, uniform building materials and hidden parking areas to make the hiway more attractive.



February 14, 1994  
 Waconia, Minnesota  
 Patrick Andrews and Steve White  
 re: community meeting with business people

The following is a summary of the information we received from meeting with a group of business people and community leaders from Waconia, and interpretations on our part as to what possibly could be some strategies for approaching the problems discussed.

The consensus of the group was that something needs to be done to improve Waconia if it hopes to survive as a commercial district. There currently are many empty shops. The impending bypass will further reduce drive through traffic and business. Highway 5 needs to call attention to downtown.

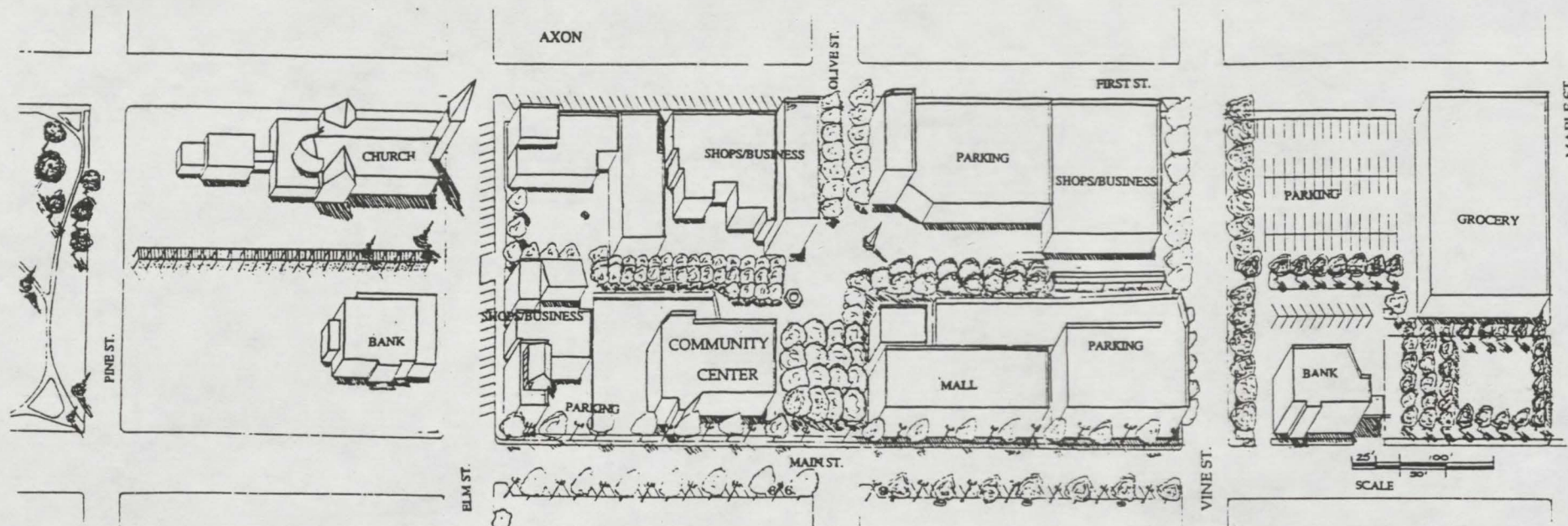
Our initial responses on what to do to address these problems includes increase interest in the downtown area with signage from Highway 5. Possibly changing the business mix by adding more entertainment or service-type businesses or other retail shops could enliven the area. Downtown should take the attitude of not competing with Highway 5 businesses, but providing an alternative to what's happening on Highway 5. Then a connection could be made between downtown and Highway 5 that draws people into town.

In general our group was convinced that downtown was not going to survive in its present state. They were unsure what were good change ideas. Ideas of connectivity, development, re-zoning, and public spaces were not recognized by our group. Each member thought only in personal terms.

The nature of Waconia seems to be that of an older population that is more or less unwilling to raise money for change. We see the need for community education, township-wide planning, proposals for public downtown space, a community center in or near the downtown, a linkage between the lake and downtown, and an influx of new business types.



MAIN & ELM SOUTH VIEW





February 14, 1994  
Waconia, Minnesota  
James Galbrecht

re: community meeting with business people and political leaders

The group we interviewed consisted of the following people: a small business owner whose shop is located on Highway 5, a small business owner whose apple orchard is located well outside of downtown Waconia, a representative of Carver County whose interests lie primarily in how the county fairgrounds will play in the evolution of Waconia, and a Waconia resident with young children who lives within the city grid close to downtown.

Our discussion was wide ranging and valuable. I was interested to learn that these people are interested in the success of downtown Waconia. However, there seemed to be a lack of recognition that, in my mind, the downtown is already "dying." Some of the participants seemed to hold a double standard in that they wanted to "save" the little downtown they have known, perhaps all their lives, but the very location of their small business was in direct conflict to that noble intention. For them it is a matter of survival. They have families to provide for and bills to pay. Consequently, they must locate their business in a location with optimum exposure and accessibility. To ask them to re-locate their business downtown, in their mind, would be asking them to walk the economic gangplank.

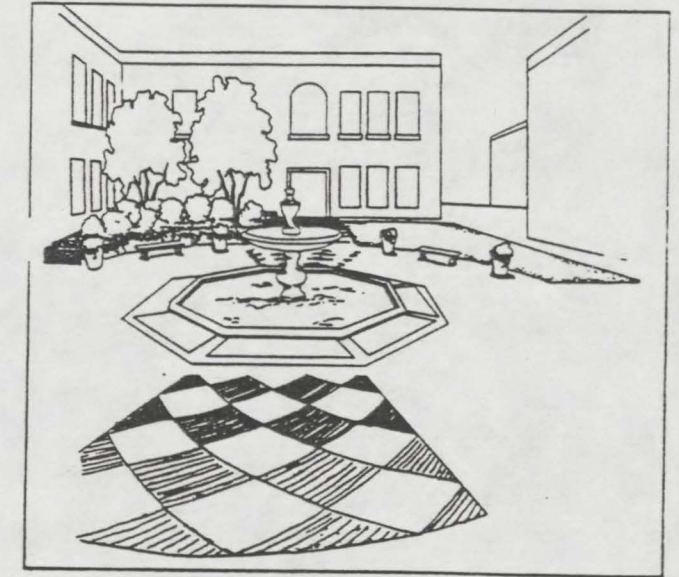
I was interested to learn that most of the participants viewed whatever current or future success Waconia might have as being dependent, to a significant degree, upon the establishment or maintenance of Waconia as a *regional* center for consumers. The Waconia health care facilities, the farm supply industry, and perhaps the grocery and auto industry are key elements from this perspective.

I was struck by the fact that nobody I have spoken with from Waconia has viewed Highway 5 as a spatial or community divider. Residents of recently constructed, single-family housing divisions located on the south side of the highway consider themselves part of the Waconia community. Likewise, residents on the north side of the highway consider those people part of their community. It is not known how their visions of, or definitions of, Waconia as larger community differ.

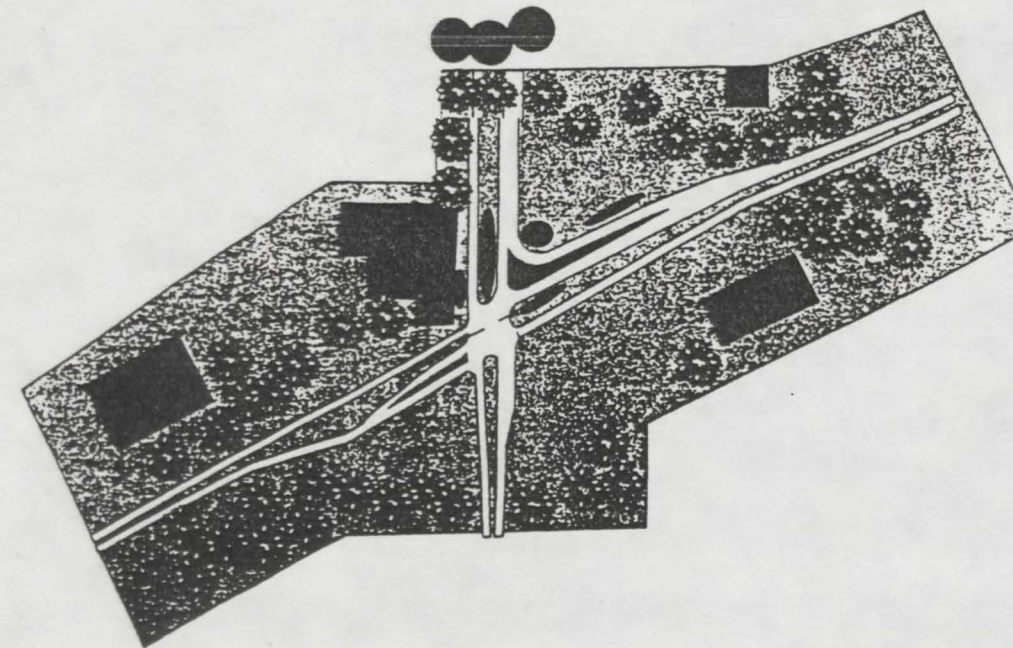
It is my conclusion, thus far, that Waconia is in need of design solutions on several levels. First, there needs to be an overall defining of downtown Waconia through architectural and landscape architectural components. Downtown Waconia needs a greater, or reinforced, "sense of place." I believe this may be accomplished through some type of comprehensive "streetscape" language introduction and strict architectural and landscape architectural guidelines for new development and construction.

Furthermore, I believe that strict attention needs to be paid to land use considerations. I think the downtown needs to be re-designed with respect to land use.

Moreover, there needs to be a clear recognition of the economic relationship between Waconia and advancing urbanization. Directly related to this is a need for understanding of where exactly the consumers that will support whatever type and volume of business in Waconia now come from, and how that may be changed and/or enhanced. Ultimately, this is where road and highway configuration will come into play.



PERSPECTIVE OF PLAZA AT ELM STREET



Special entrance lanes at highway 5, along with signage and plenty of flowers, entice passersby to take a closer look.

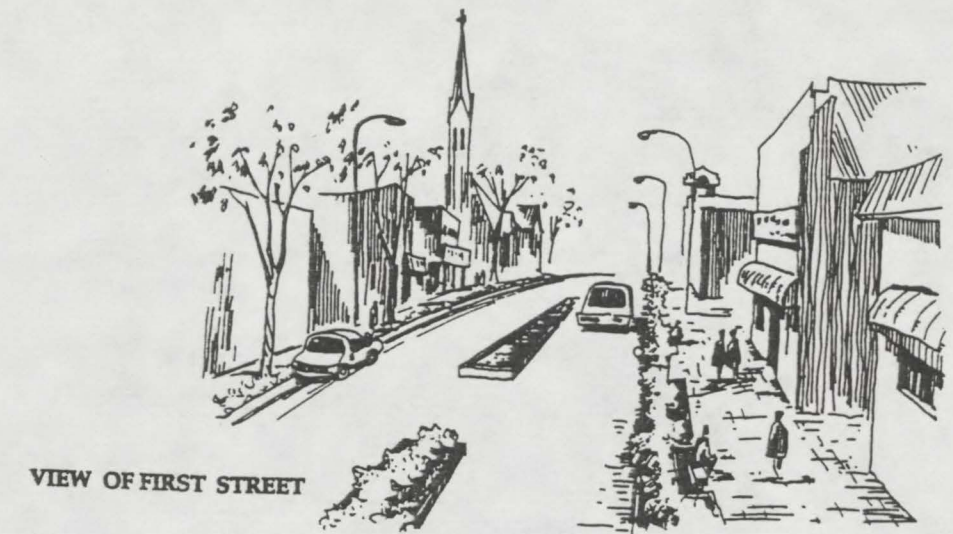


February 14, 1994  
Waconia, Minnesota  
Jianwei Li, Monica Mogren, and Aaron Pearson  
re: community meeting with business people and junior and senior high school students

One major theme during our discussion with these particular community members was the need for activities that would keep their peer group in Waconia for social activities. A recreation center that had both structured activities and facilities for open use seemed to be a common desire. The center could have swimming, track, weights, and various ball courts. We think that it would also be important that this facility act as a gathering place for the entire community. A need for a number of new restaurants was also mentioned. Much of the suggestions focused on fast food. In general, much of what they wanted in the community center and restaurants seemed to be places or excuses for gathering.

A disturbing trend in our discussion was the lack of connection that the lake, island, and downtown had to Highway 5. This could lead to a breakdown of what the students felt was the sense of what Waconia is. This was troublesome because the students seemed to feel as though there was no relation, and that there did not need to be a relationship, between the old and new areas of Waconia. This does not mean that they did not find the downtown valuable. They just did not have a way to use or access the downtown, except for the theater. We felt that for the whole area to be prosperous there needs to be connections. The large draw of the lake, theater, and highway currently do not have support for other off-shoot activities in the town. When we brought this up the students agreed. Much of what they had already suggested would help make some of these connections.

The main concern and need seems to be to find a way to add activities that help connect the lake, island, downtown, and Highway 5 while still maintaining the sense of community that is Waconia.



PRECEDENT STREETSCAPE USED TO HELP  
DEFINE CHARACTER OF DOWNTOWN.



February 14, 1994  
 Waconia, Minnesota  
 Finette Magnuson and Ming Zhong  
 re: community meeting with grade school students

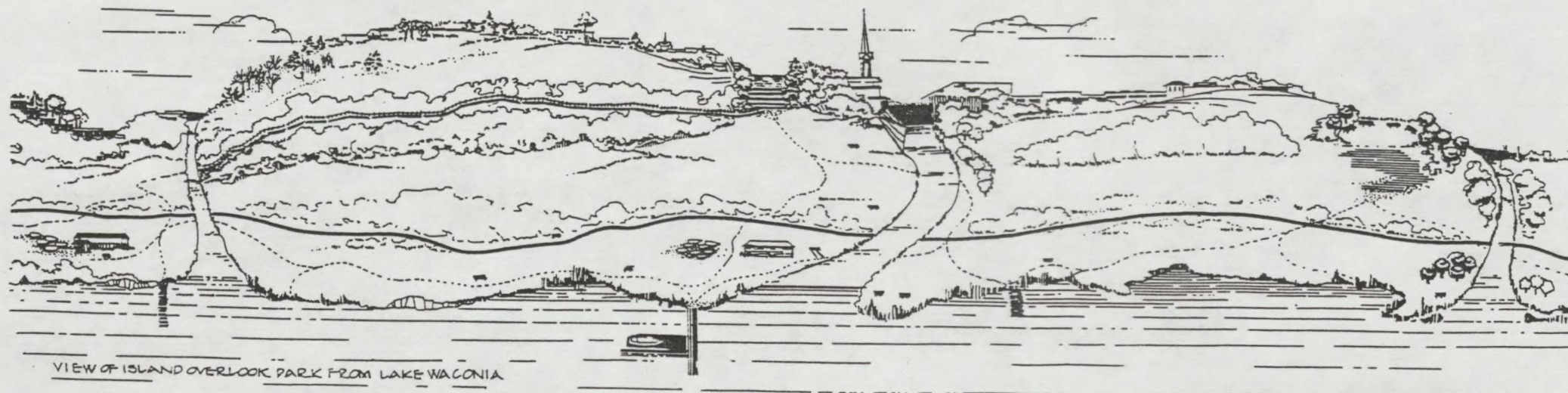
Our meeting involved interviewing children from the local elementary school. The particular students interviewed happened to live out-of-town and took the bus home from school everyday. The following are the questions they were asked with summaries of their respective responses to each:

- Do you think the highway stoplight is a problem?  
 -No, just wait for the light to turn.
- Do you feel safe downtown?  
 -Yes during the day because there are lots of people. I wouldn't go alone at night.
- Do your parents let you go downtown alone or with friends?  
 -Yes, during the day. Don't know of anything bad happening in Waconia. It's not like Eden Prairie or Minnetonka.
- What would you like to see downtown that isn't there now?  
 -Clothing store, ice cream store, Dairy Queen
- What do you do downtown?  
 -Go to the theater. Go to the park. Go to Marsden Drug. Would be nice to get an ice cream when at the park.
- Do you swim at the lake? Where?  
 -At the beach.
- Do you boat on the lake?  
 -Water-ski with friends. Boat at the marina.
- Does any part around the lake have a bike path?  
 -Both looked questioning and decided "no". They both wistfully agreed that it would be nice to be able to bike around the lake.

We then had the children draw pictures of Waconia for us. Both drew the theater as the first and their favorite spot when they think of Waconia. Then they both drew restaurants... Hardee's, Prairie House, Subway.



BOAT CLUB



VIEW OF ISLAND OVERLOOK PARK FROM LAKE WACONIA



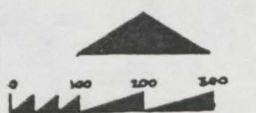
# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

## CITY ON TWO HILLS

DOWNTOWN AND  
OVERLOOK  
GATHERING SPACES

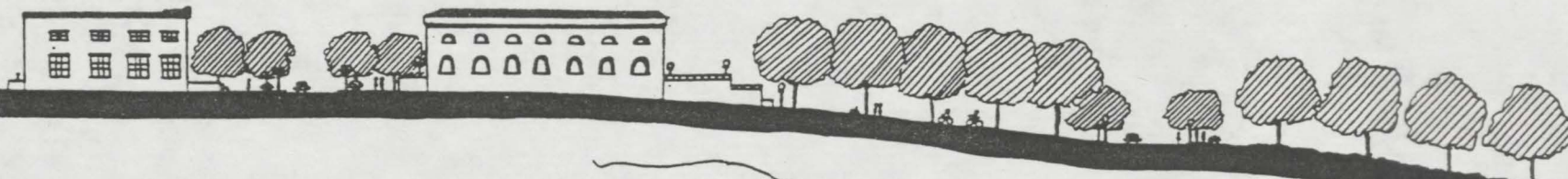


DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 8272 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QUARTER 1994

LIZ ANDERSON



### DOWNTOWN GOALS:

CREATE FOCUS FOR  
HISTORIC FEATURES  
AND ACTIVITIES

MARK ENTRANCES TO  
DOWNTOWN AND  
MAKE CONNECTIONS  
FROM GREENWAY TO  
DOWNTOWN

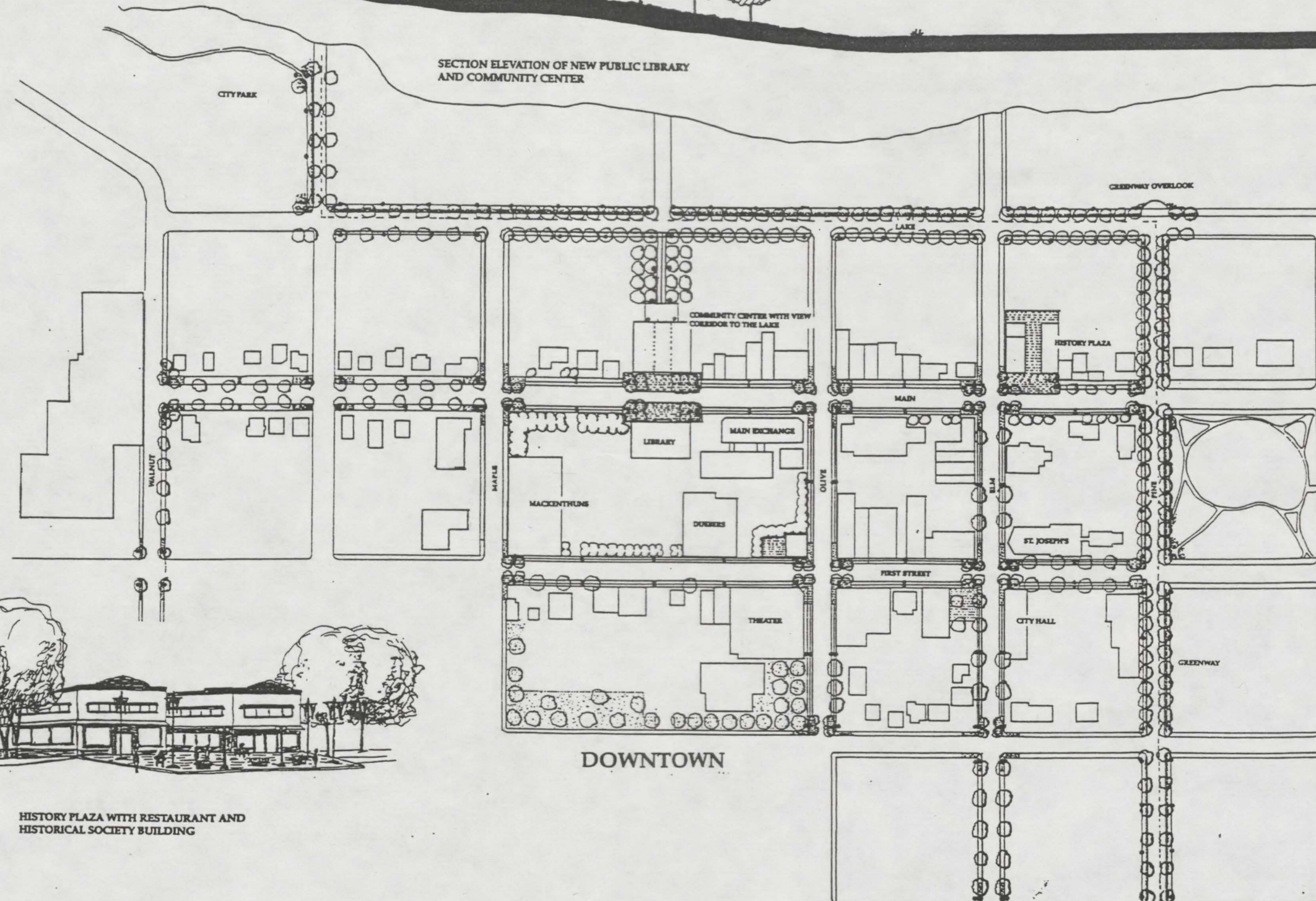
CREATE GATHERING  
PLACES WHICH  
CONNECT PEOPLE TO  
THE LAKE WITH  
OVERLOOKS

CREATE PEDESTRIAN  
FRIENDLY STREETS

SECTION ELEVATION OF NEW PUBLIC LIBRARY  
AND COMMUNITY CENTER

CITY PARK

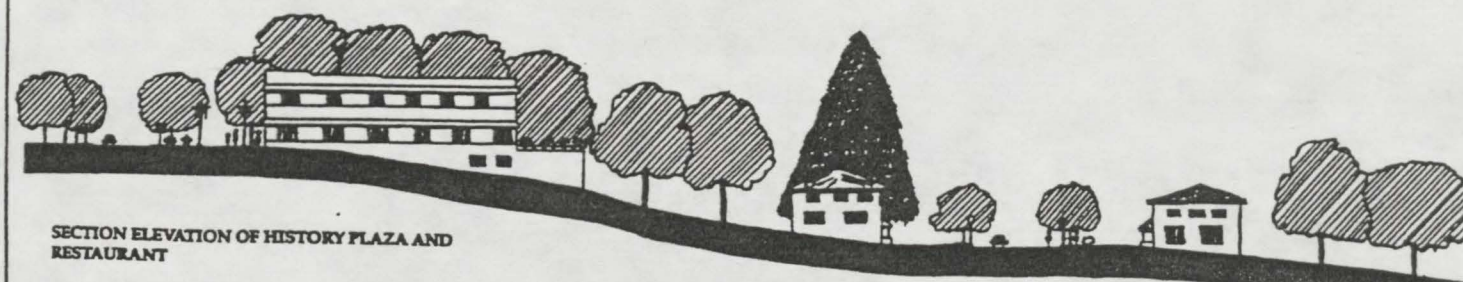
GREENWAY OVERLOOK



DOWNTOWN



HISTORY PLAZA WITH RESTAURANT AND  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUILDING



SECTION ELEVATION OF HISTORY PLAZA AND  
RESTAURANT



STREETSCAPE ALONG MAIN STREET



# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

## CITY ON TWO HILLS



VIEW TO THE WEST ON HIGHWAY 5 - THE TOWN ON TWO HILLS



VIEW TO OLD WACONIA FROM NEW CITY PARK ON 10TH STREET

### PLAN GOALS:

CREATE A STRONG SENSE OF A SINGLE COMMUNITY

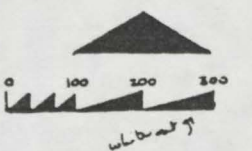
CREATE VISUAL IDENTITY FOR TOWN

CONNECT OPEN SPACE, ACTIVITY CENTERS AND THE DOWNTOWN WITH BICYCLE PEDESTIAN GREENWAY

FOCUS ACTIVITY ON THE DOWNTOWN

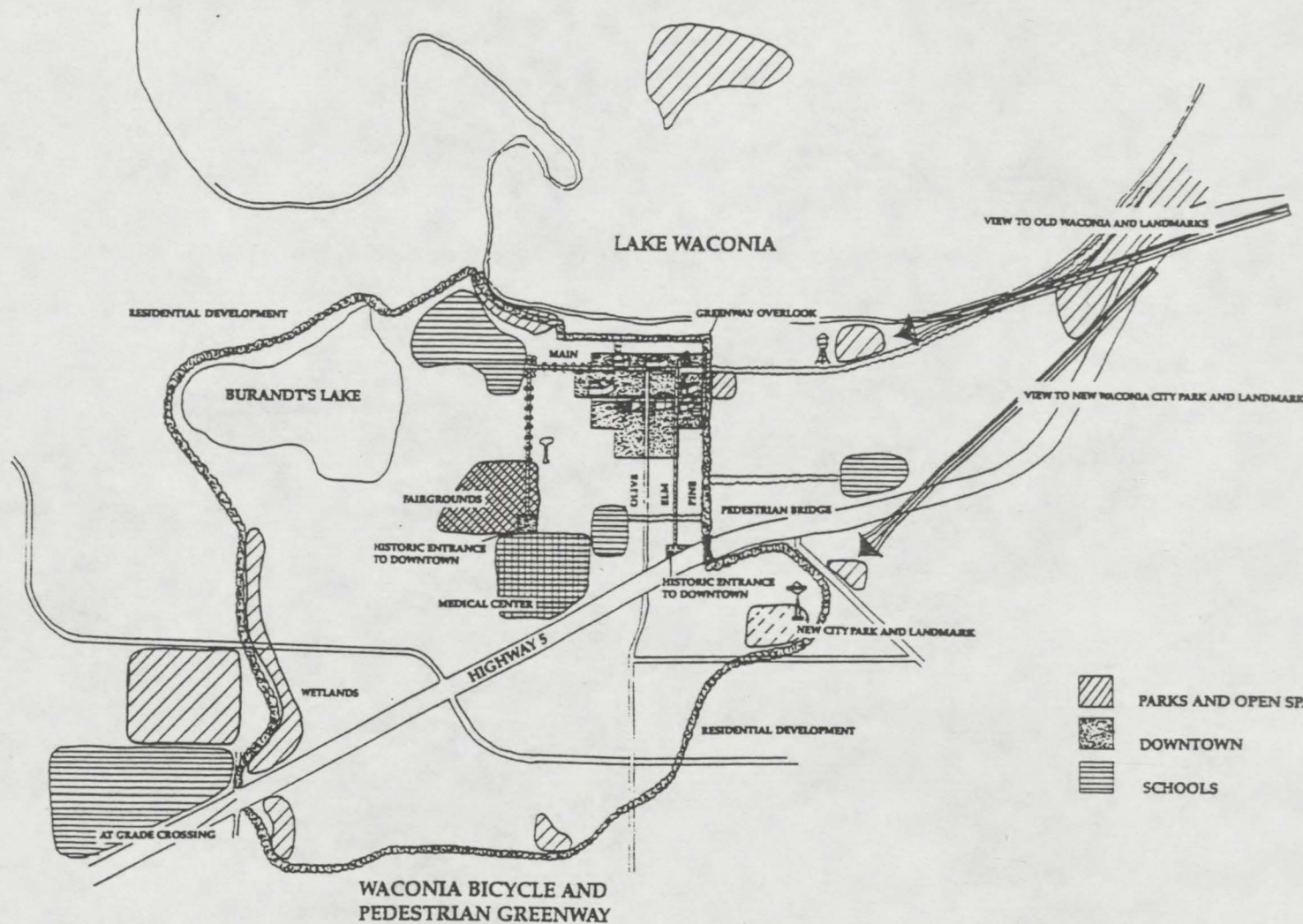
INVITE TRAVELERS ALONG HIGHWAY 5 AND VISITORS TO THE MEDICAL CENTER TO EXPERIENCE HISTORIC WACONIA

CONTEXT AND GREENWAY

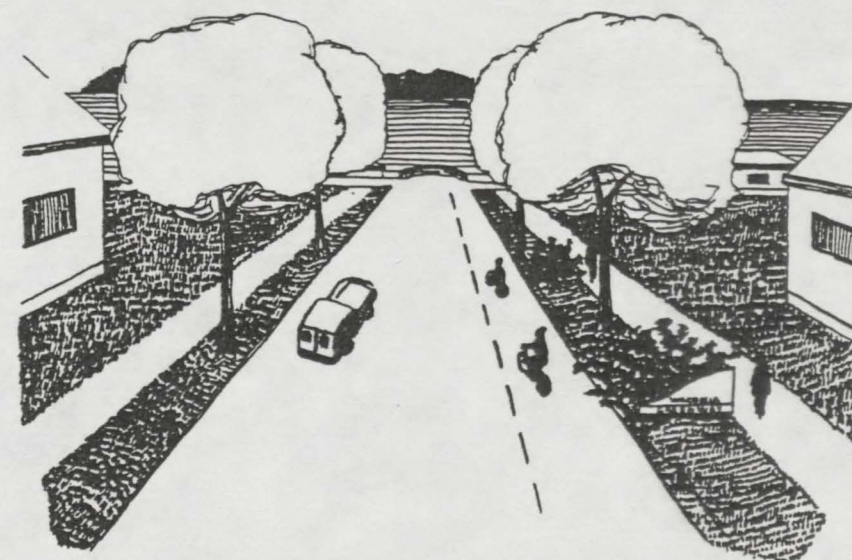


DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
LA 8222 DESIGN OF GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QUARTER 1994  
LIZ ANDERSON



BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN GREENWAY SOUTH OF HIGHWAY 5



BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN GREENWAY ALONG PINE STREET NEAR THE OVERLOOK



# WACONIA

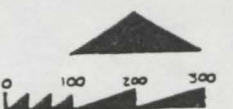
## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

## DOWN- TOWN WACONIA

BUSINESS DISTRICT  
PLAN

- CREATE ICON FOR WACONIA
- STRENGTHEN SIX BLOCK CORE
- ORGANIZE EXISTING ELEMENTS
- CREATE HIERARCHY OF CIRCULATION
- TAKE PEOPLE TO THE LAKE



DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

NATHAN ANDERSON

LAKE WACONIA

NEW LAKE ACCESS PARK

EXPAND EXISTING PARKING  
RAMP TO EDGE OF BLOCK

TREES BUFFER VASTNESS OF PARKING LOT

ABANDON OLIVE BETWEEN 1ST & MAIN  
FOR PEDESTRIAN GREENWAY

RECLAIM ALLEY FOR PEOPLE  
- CONNECTS LENGTH OF BUSINESS DISTRICT  
- BUSINESSES OPEN UP TO ALLEY

NEW COMMUNITY CENTER AT  
"CENTER" OF COMMUNITY

OLIVE IS MAIN ENTRANCE FROM HWY.5

COMMERCIAL

INSTITUTION

OPEN SPACE

PARKING

SECTION ALONG OLIVE STREET FROM 1ST TO LAKE SHORE



# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

## DOWN-TOWN WACONIA

OPEN SPACE DETAILS

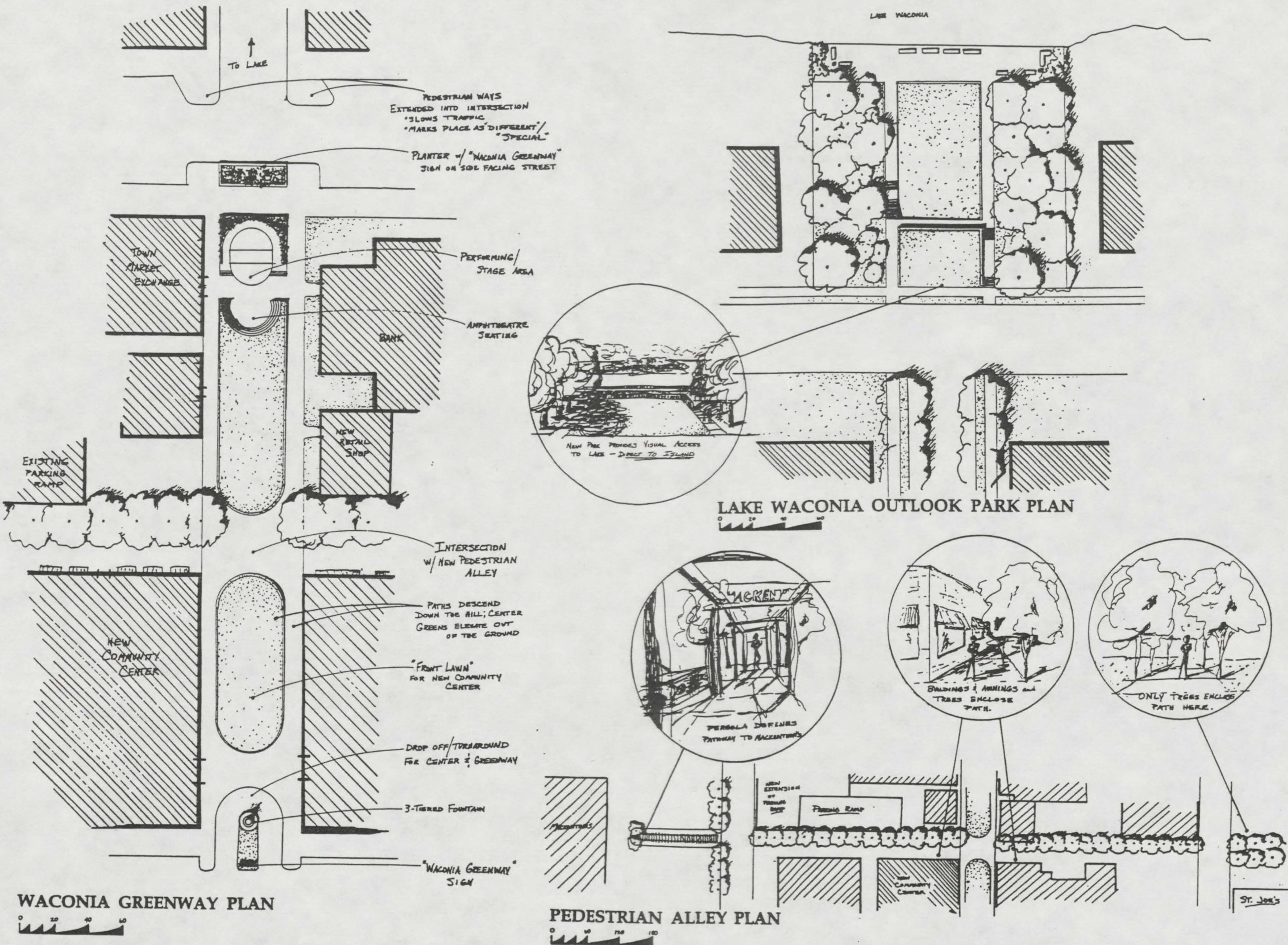


DEPARTMENT OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

LA 8222 DESIGN OF GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

NATHAN ANDERSON





# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

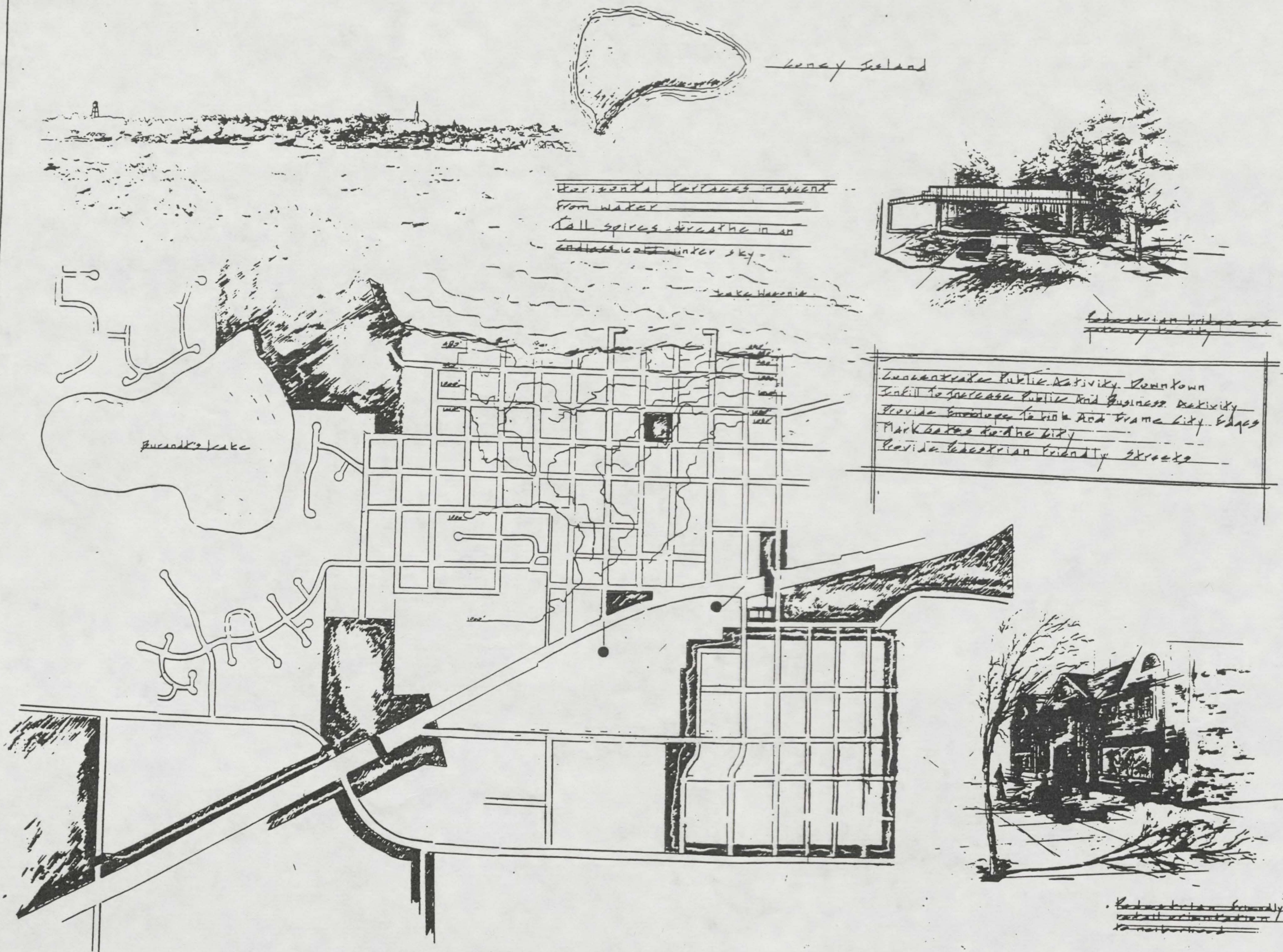
### STRATEGY FOR DOWNTOWN WACONIA

DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

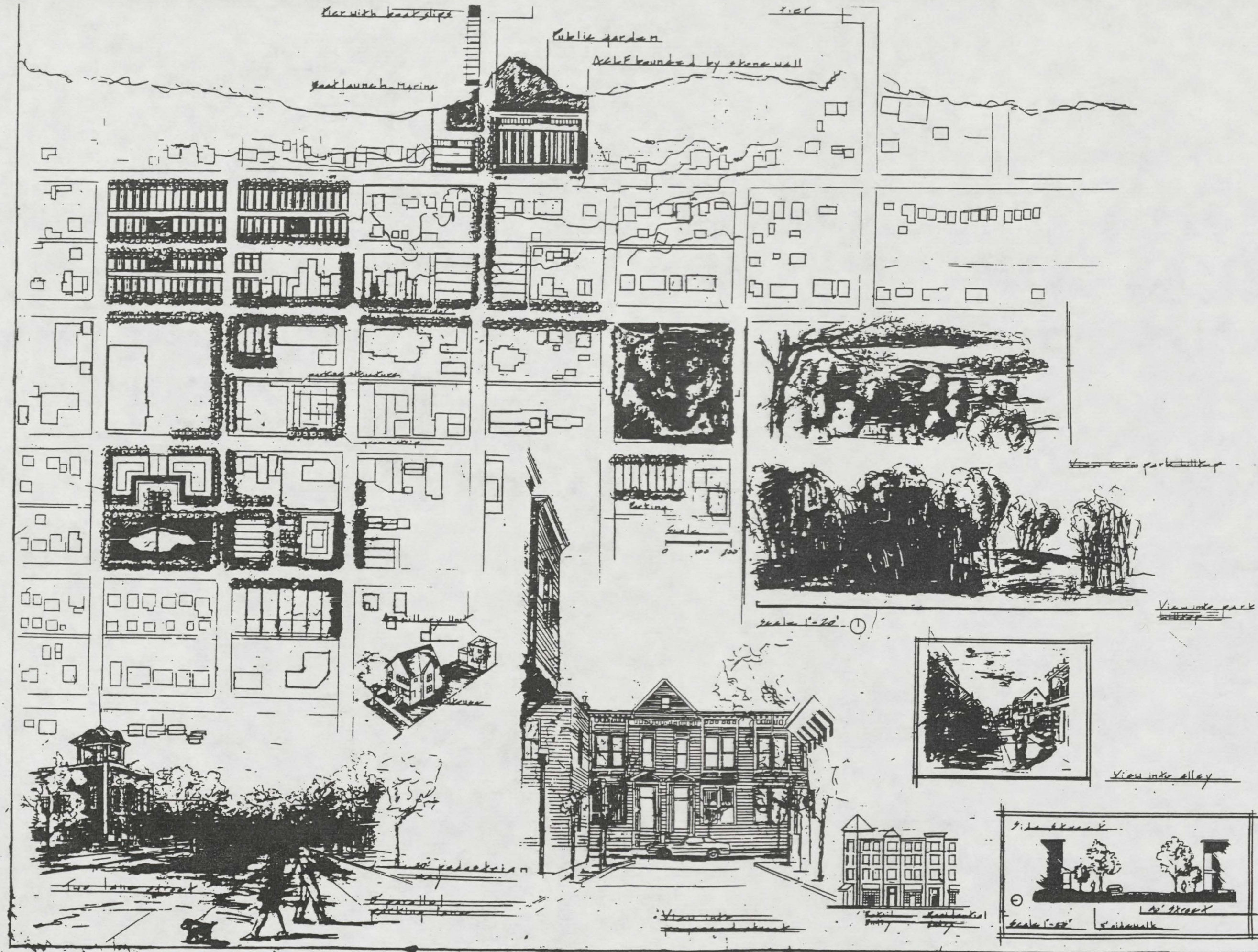
LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

Patrick Andrews







# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

### STRATEGY FOR DOWNTOWN WACONIA

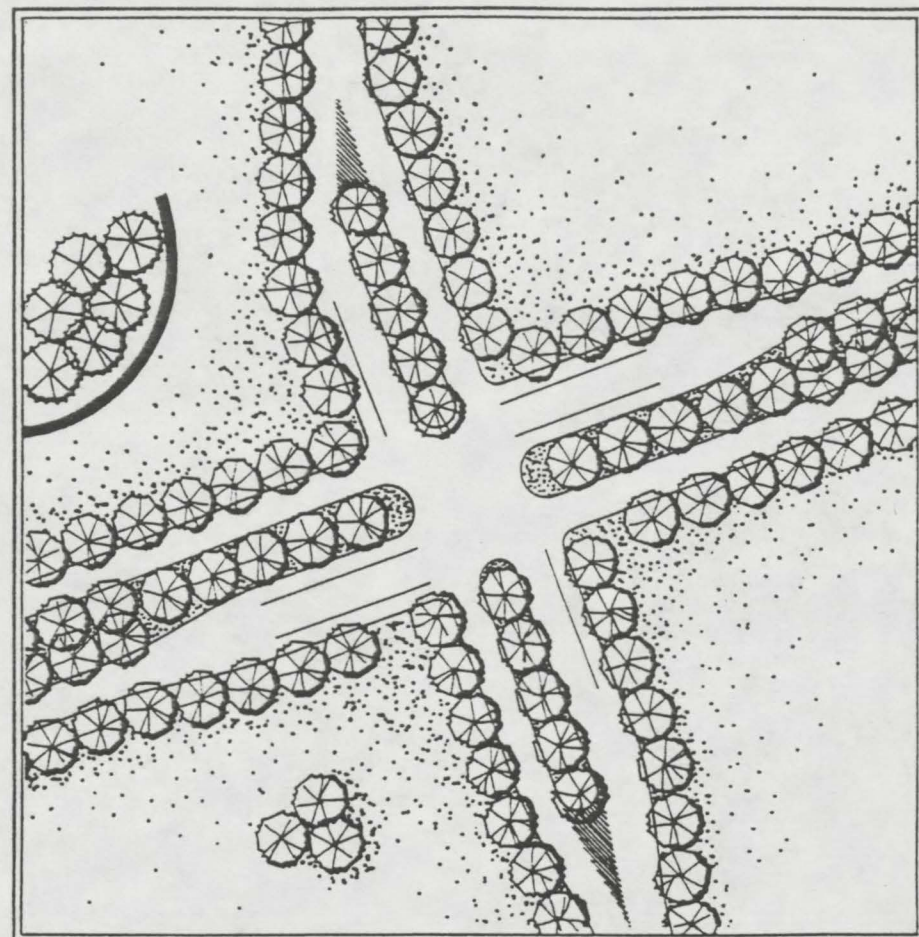


DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994  
Patrick Andrews





SCALE  
0 30 60

# KEY GOALS:

- SLOW TRAFFIC DOWN
- CREATE BOULEVARD EFFECT
- CREATE INTERSECTION HIERARCHY

WACONIA DOWNTOWN



LAKE WACONIA

BOARDWALK

MAIN STREET

ELM STREET

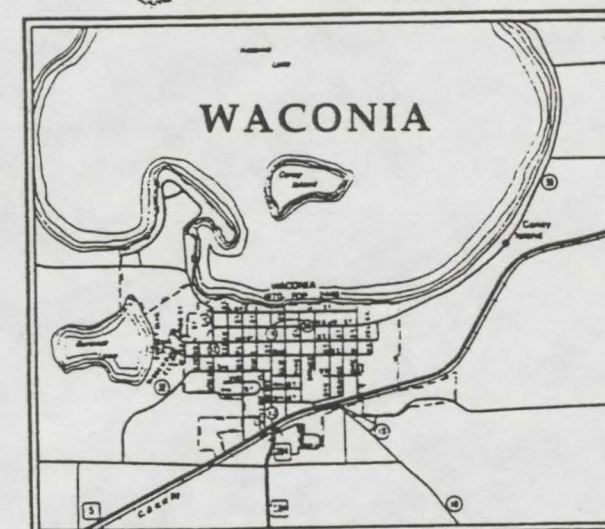
PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

WACONIA SIGN

GATEWAY GREEN

WACONIA HIGH SCHOOL

STATE HWY 5



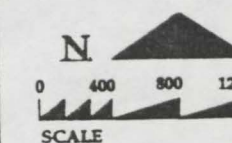
WACONIA

HILLTOP TOWN  
WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

HWY 5 CORRIDOR

WACONIA:  
GATHERING  
PLACE  
REVISITED



DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

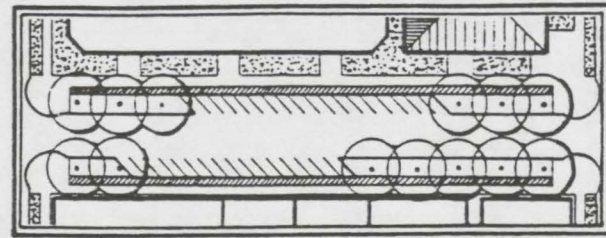
LA8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER 1994

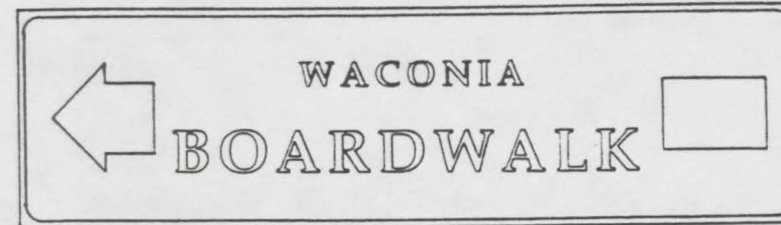
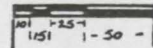
MONICA MOGREN  
JAMES GALBRECHT



# LAKE WACONIA

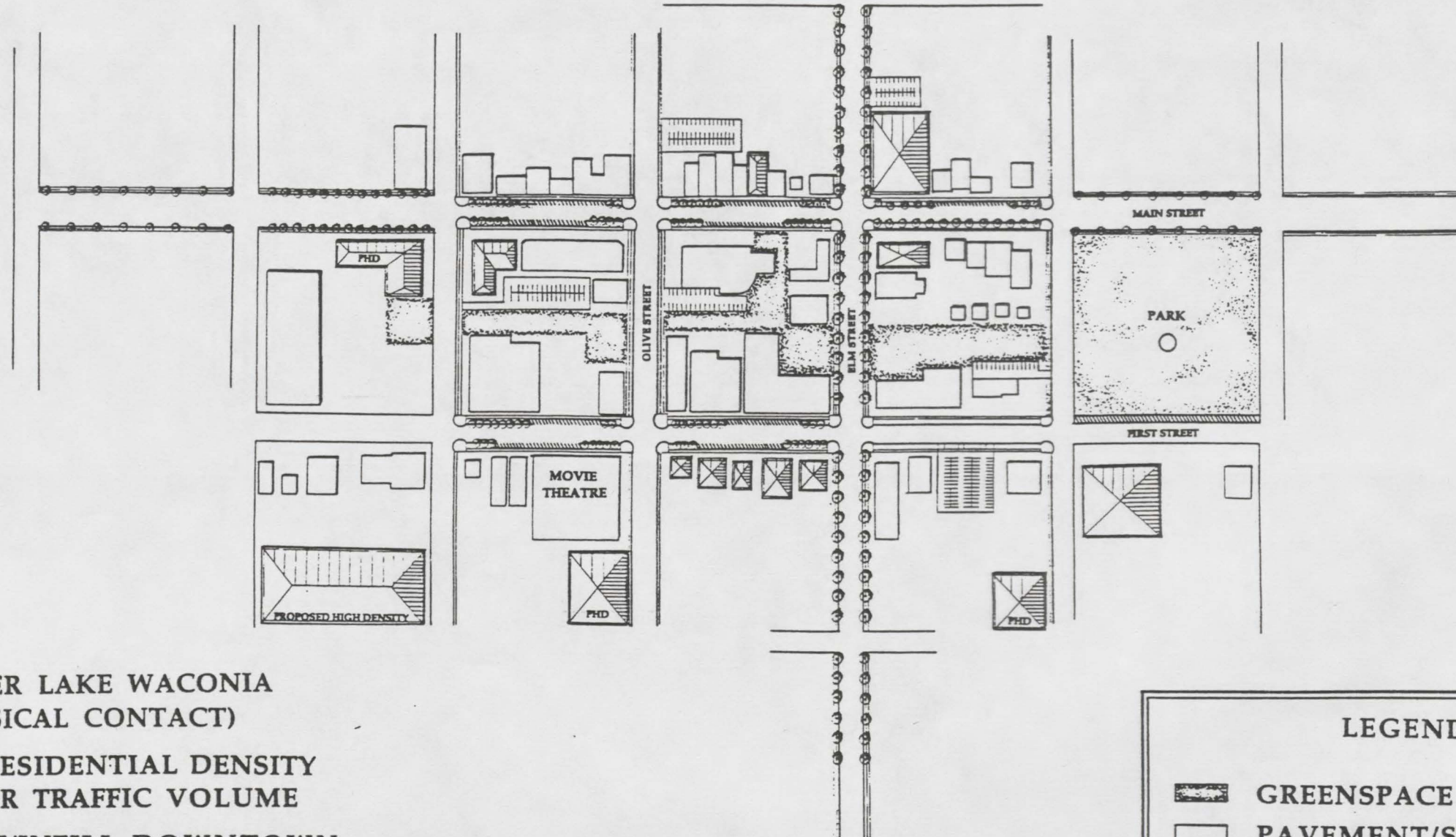


SCALE



BOARDWALK

LAKE  
SIDE  
COMMERCE  
AREA



## KEY GOALS:

- (RE)DISCOVER LAKE WACONIA  
(MAKE PHYSICAL CONTACT)
- INCREASE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY  
AND VISITOR TRAFFIC VOLUME
- CENTRALIZE/INFILL DOWNTOWN  
BUSINESS DISTRICT
- PEDESTRIANIZE DOWNTOWN

## LEGEND

- GREENSPACE
- PAVEMENT/SIDEWALK
- EXISTING STRUCTURES
- PROPOSED STRUCTURES

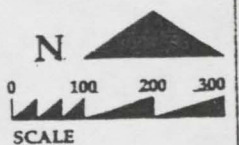
## WACONIA

HILLTOP TOWN  
WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

DOWNTOWN  
WACONIA

WACONIA:  
GATHERING  
PLACE  
REVISITED



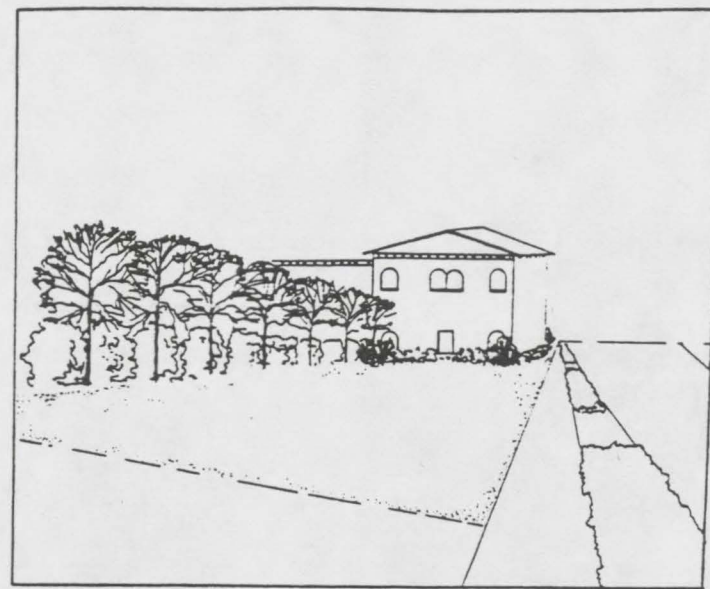
DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

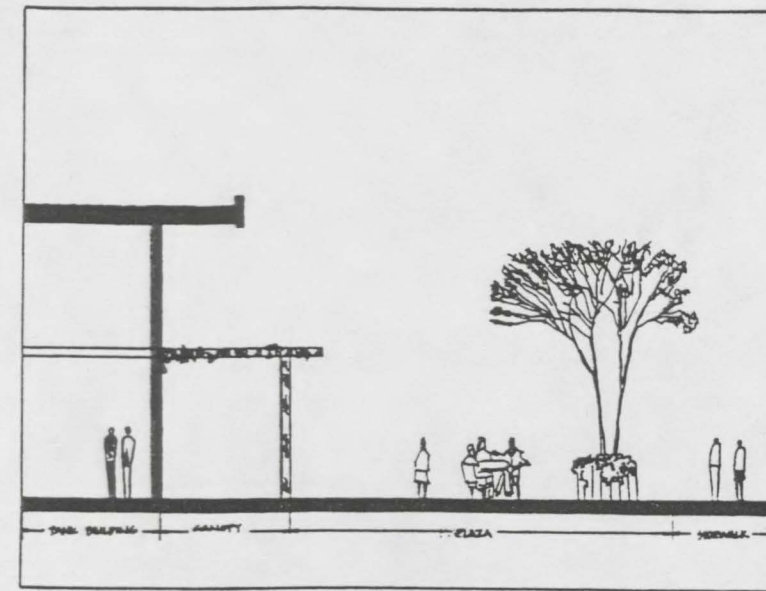
WINTER 1994

MONICA MOGREN  
JAMES GALBRECHT

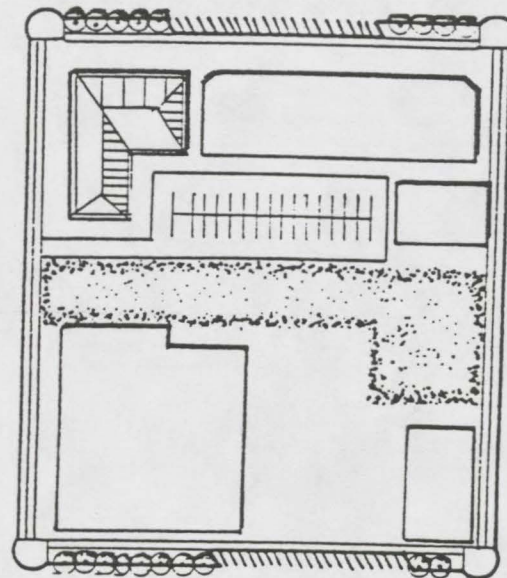
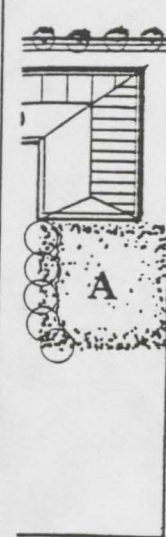




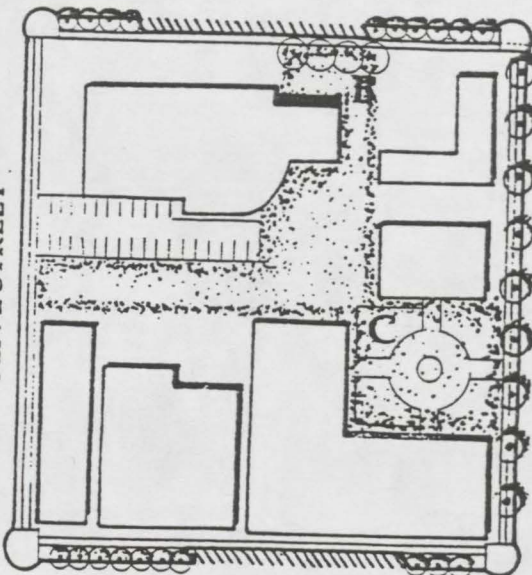
A PERSPECTIVE OF TERMINUS GREENSPACE



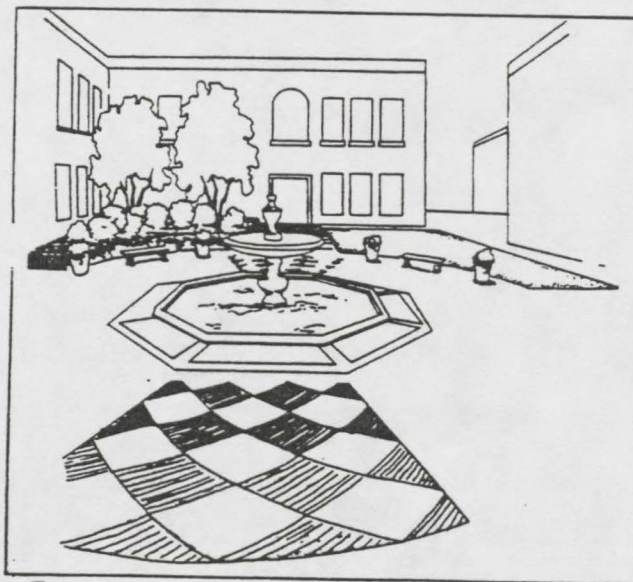
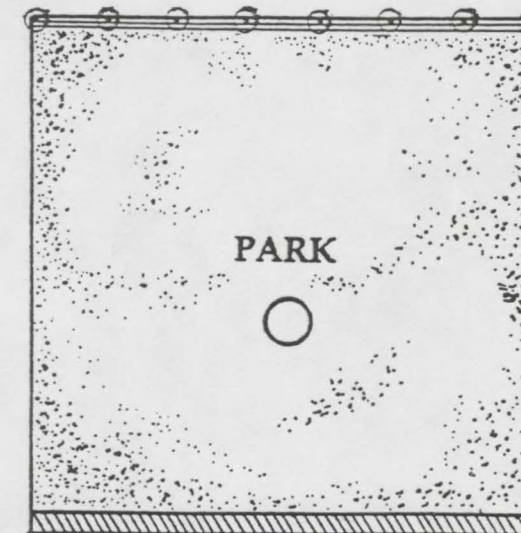
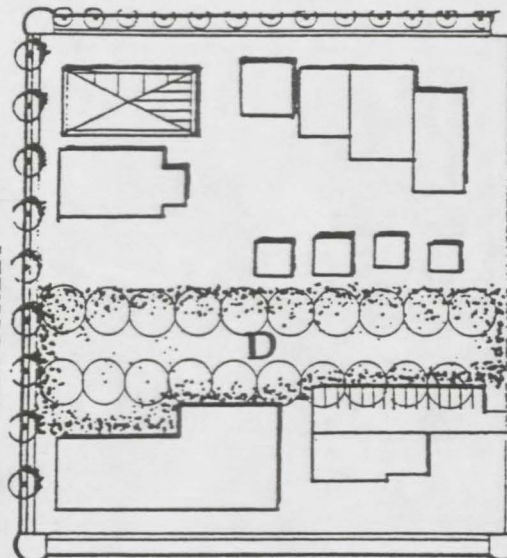
B SECTION OF BANK PLAZA



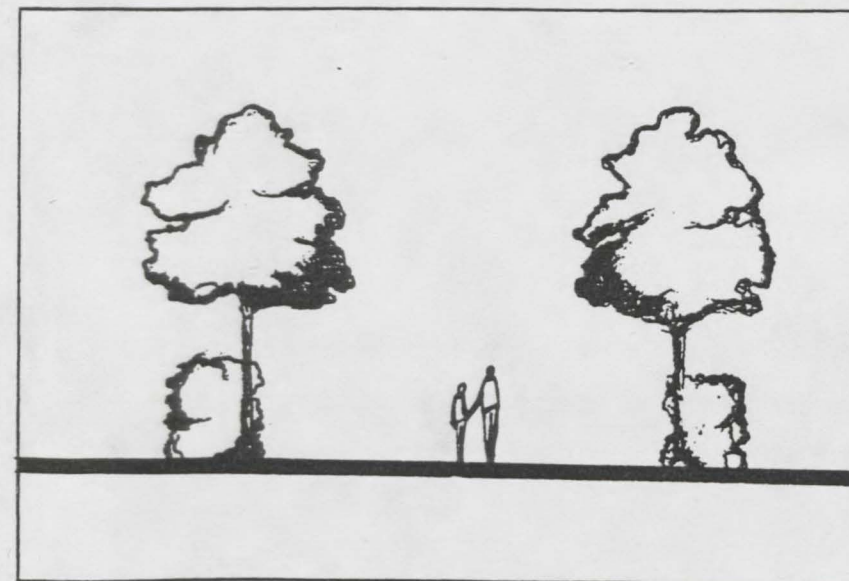
OLIVE STREET



ELM STREET



C PERSPECTIVE OF PLAZA AT ELM STREET



D SECTION OF GREENWAY SPACE LEADING TO AND FROM THE PARK

# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

### A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

DOWNTOWN WACONIA

WACONIA:  
GATHERING  
PLACE  
REVISITED



DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER 1994

MONICA MOGREN  
JAMES GALBRECHT



# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

## WACONIA: GATHERING PLACE REVISITED

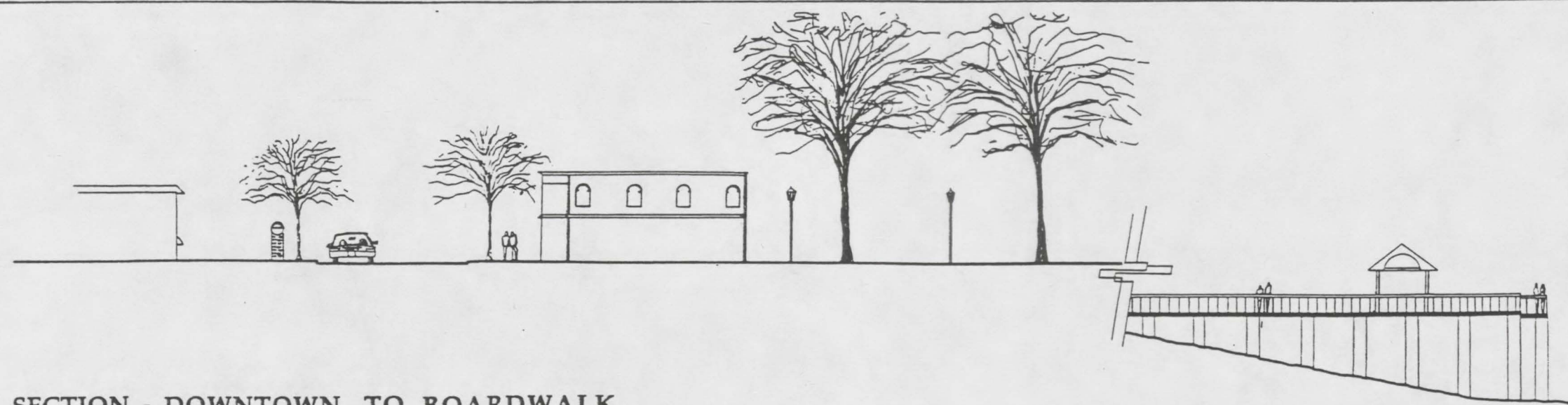
DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

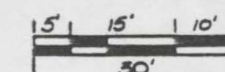
WINTER 1994

MONICA MOGREN  
JAMES GALBRECHT

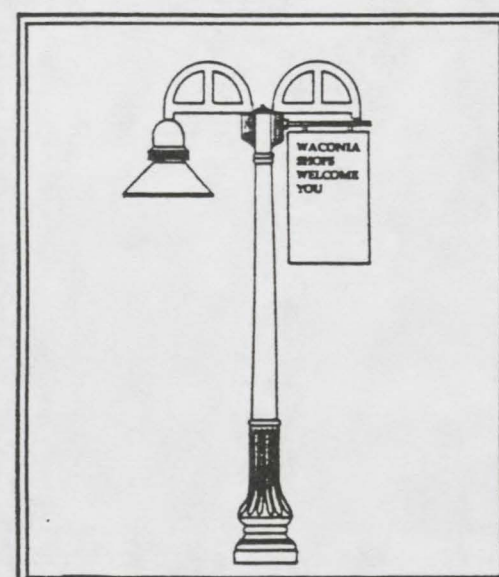
SECTION - DOWNTOWN TO BOARDWALK



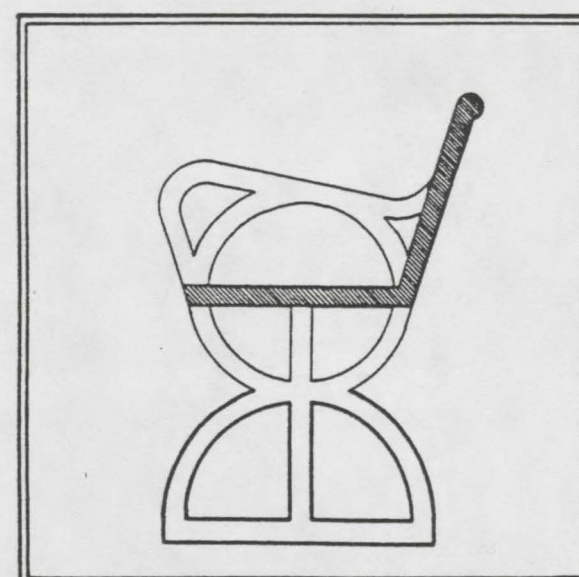
SCALE



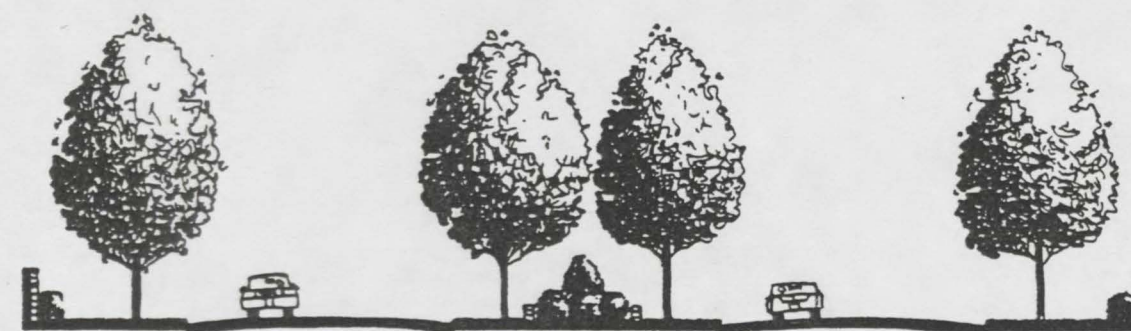
SECTION/ELEVATION DOWNTOWN WACONIA



LIGHTING/SIGNAGE

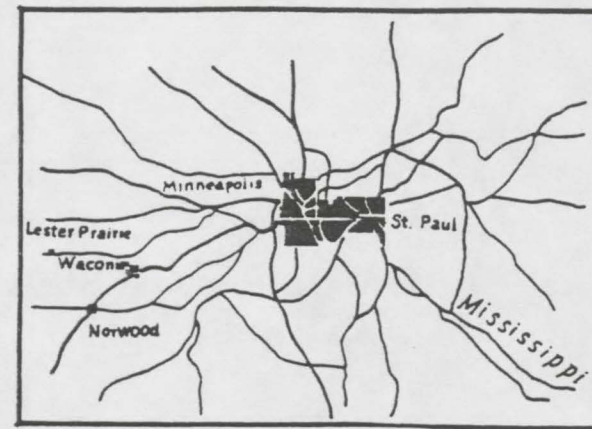


SEATING



SECTION - HIGHWAY 5 CORRIDOR



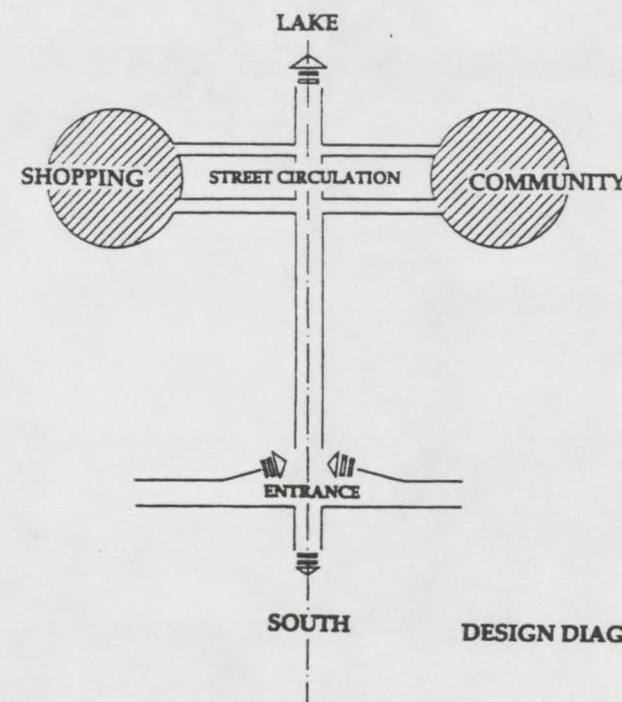


CONTEXT MAP

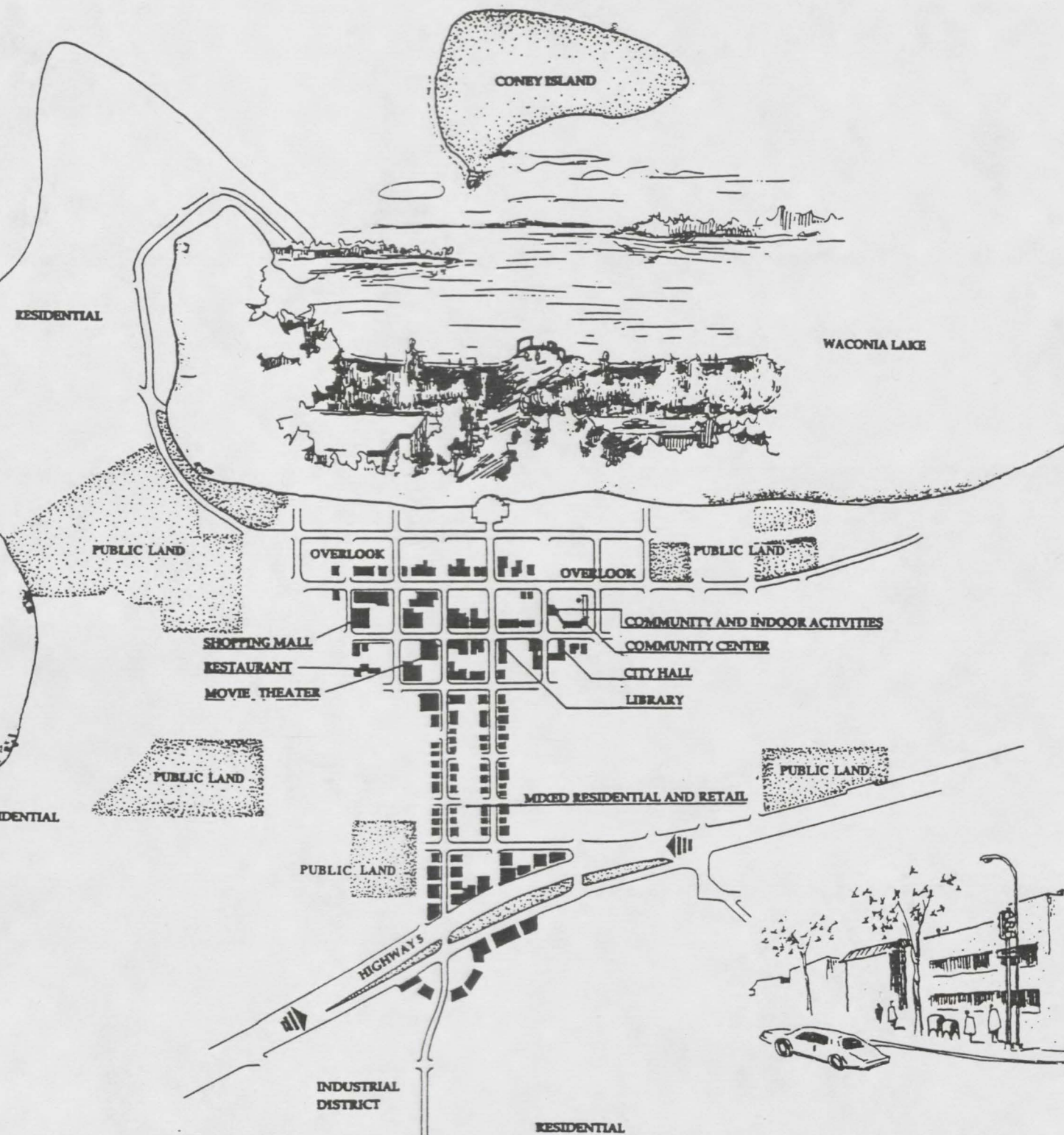
AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT



RESIDENTIAL



DESIGN DIAGRAM



HIGHWAY BUSINESS

CAR DEALER  
GAS STATION  
FAST-FOOD  
INDUSTRIAL

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS

RETAIL BUSINESS  
SHOPPING MALL  
HOTEL  
ENTERTAINMENT  
RESTAURANT



CITY OF WACONIA

SCALE: 0 100' 200' 300' 400'

ENTRANCE TO DOWNTOWN

# WACONIA

HILLTOP TOWN  
WITH AVIEW

A STUDY OF GATHERING  
PLACE

LINEAR CIRCULA-  
TIONS REINFORCE A  
SPATIAL HIERARCHY  
PATTERN FOR  
GATHERING PLACE

DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

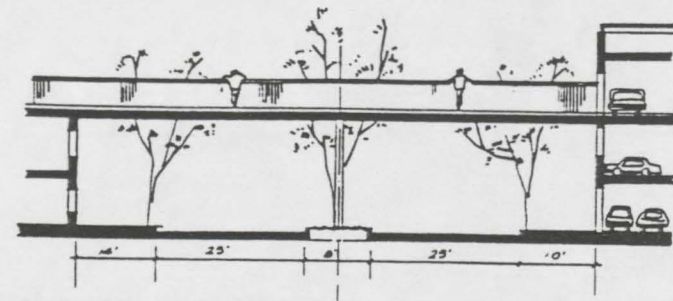
LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

JIANWEI LI

MAP 1 OF 2





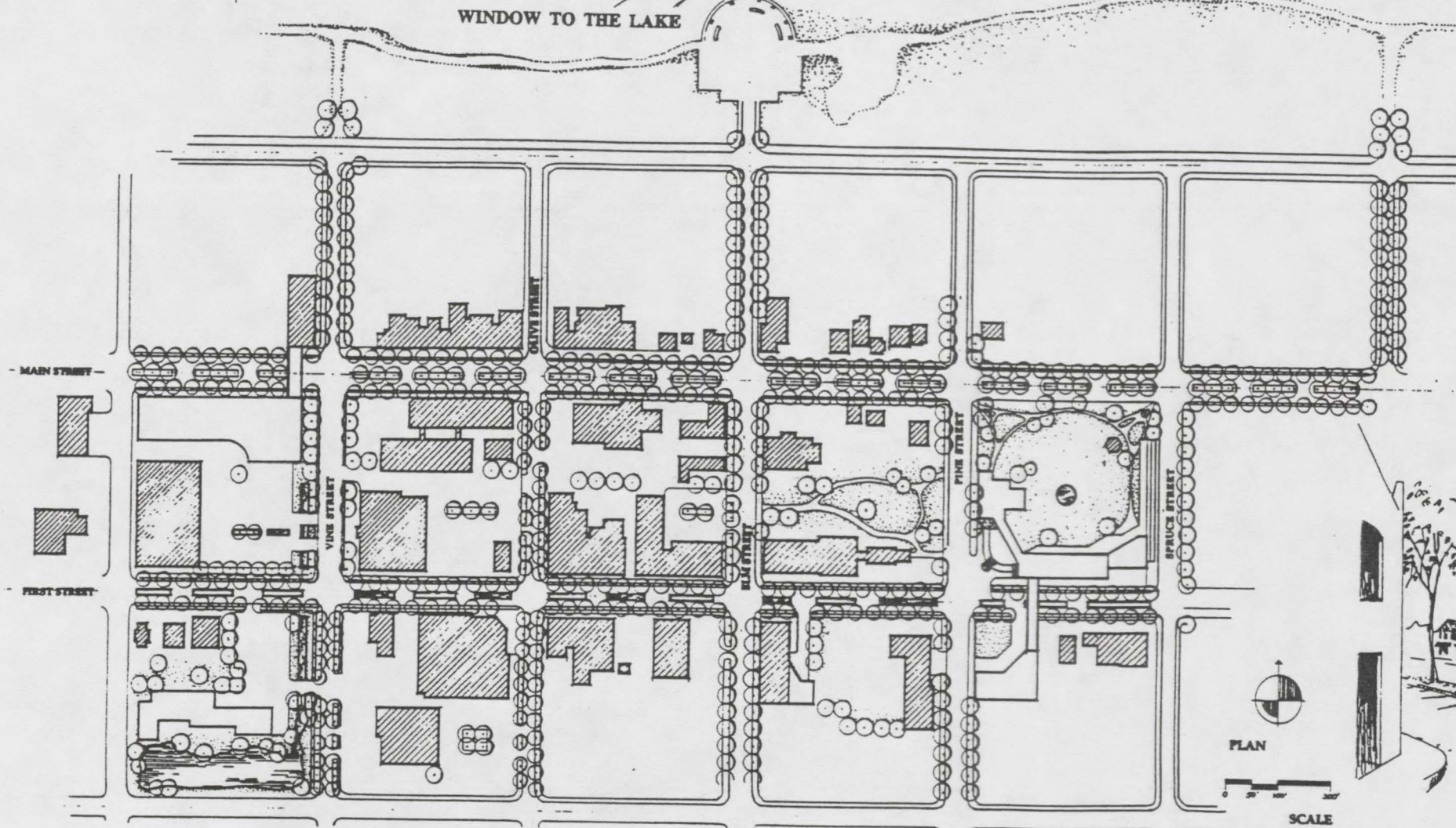
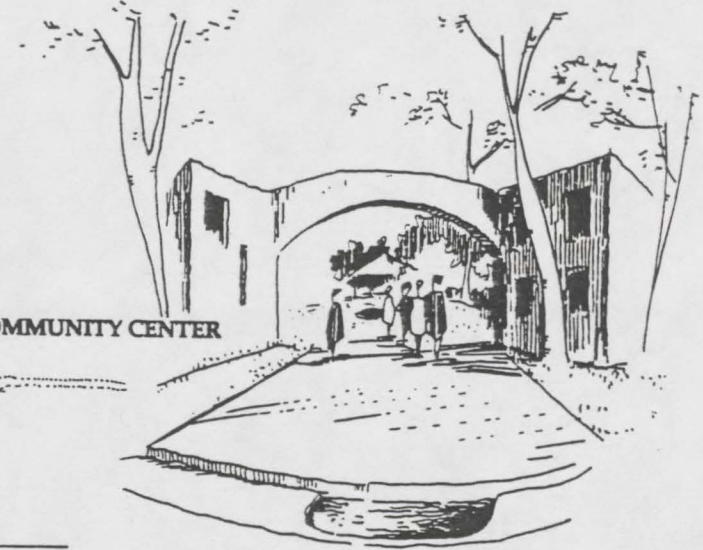
SECTION OF PARKING STRUCTURE



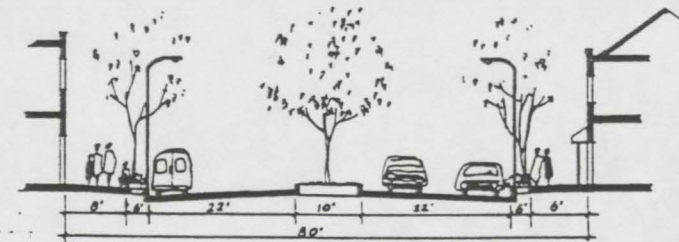
WINDOW TO THE LAKE

WACONIA LAKE

GATEWAY TO COMMUNITY CENTER



DOWNTOWN WACONIA



SECTION OF MAIN STREET

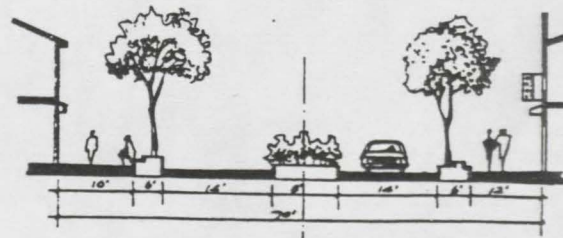
SCALE: 1"=10'-0"



VIEW OF MAIN STREET



VIEW OF SHOPPING CENTER



SECTION OF FIRST STREET

SCALE: 1"=10'-0"



VIEW OF FIRST STREET

LEGEND

- EXISTING STRUCTURE
- PROPOSED STRUCTURE
- WATER
- SKYWAY

# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

### A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

LINEAR CIRCULA-  
TIONS REINFORCE A  
SPATIAL HIERARCHY  
PATTERN FOR  
GATHERING PLACE

DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

JIANWEI LI

MAP 2 OF 2



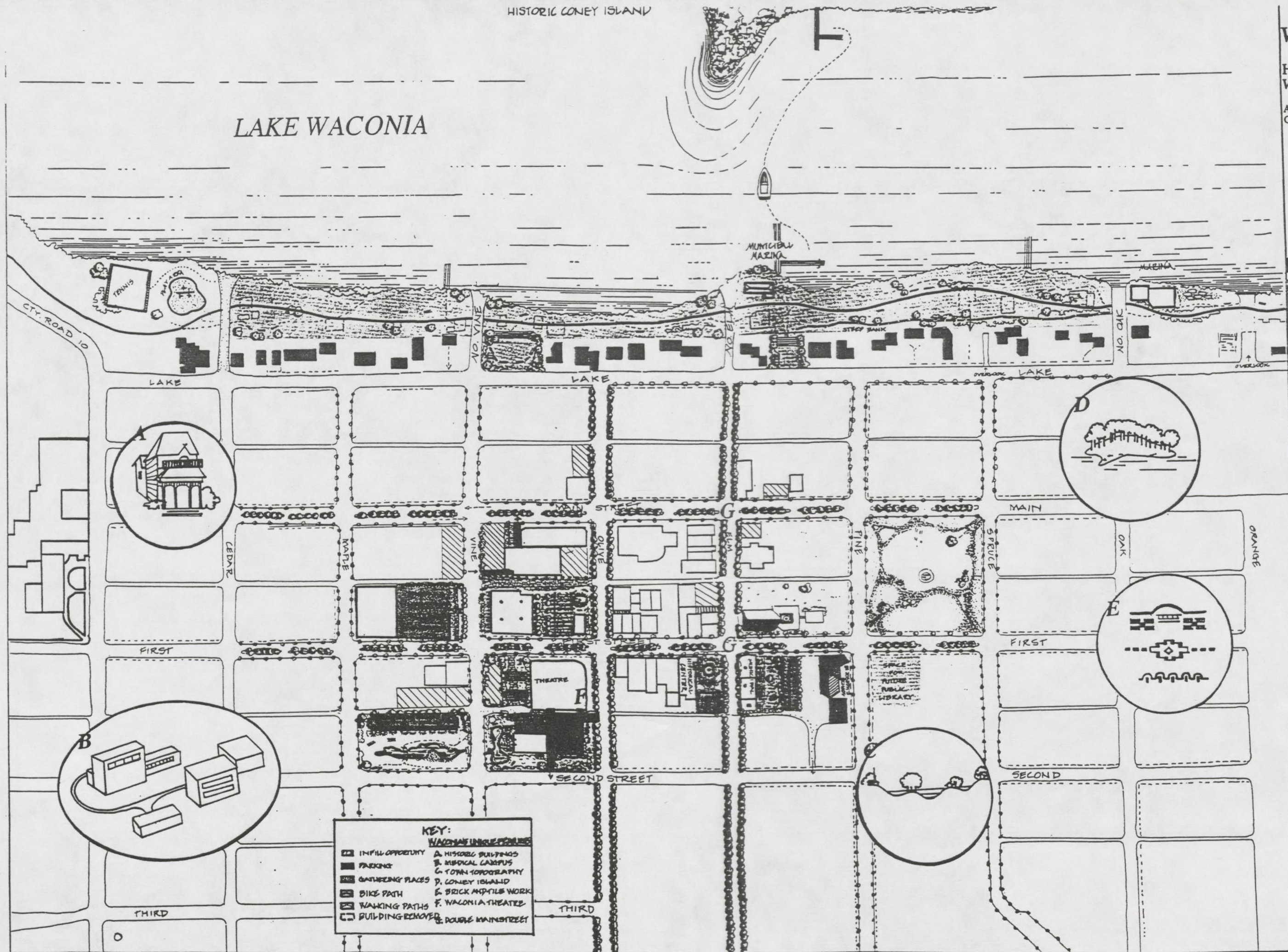
# LAKE WACONIA

## WACONIA

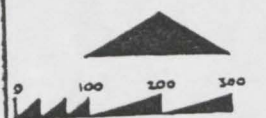
### HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

## LAKESHORE HEIGHTS



PLAN



DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

FINETTE MAGNUSON



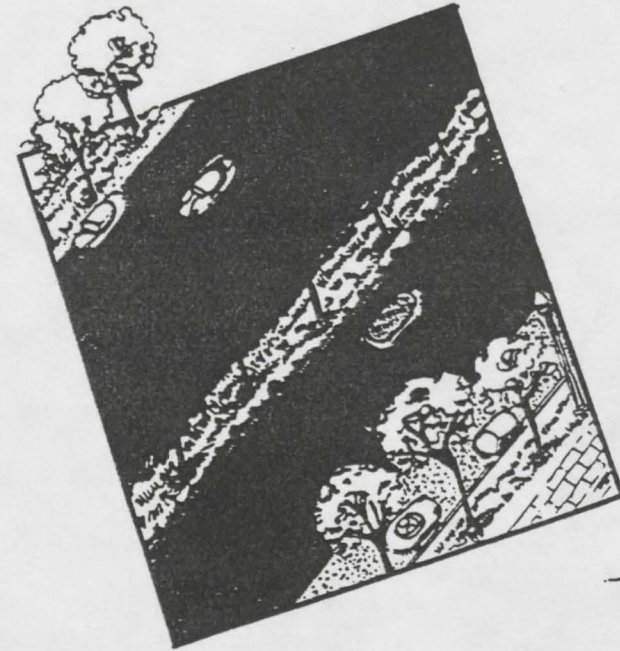
SCALE: 1" = 10'

N

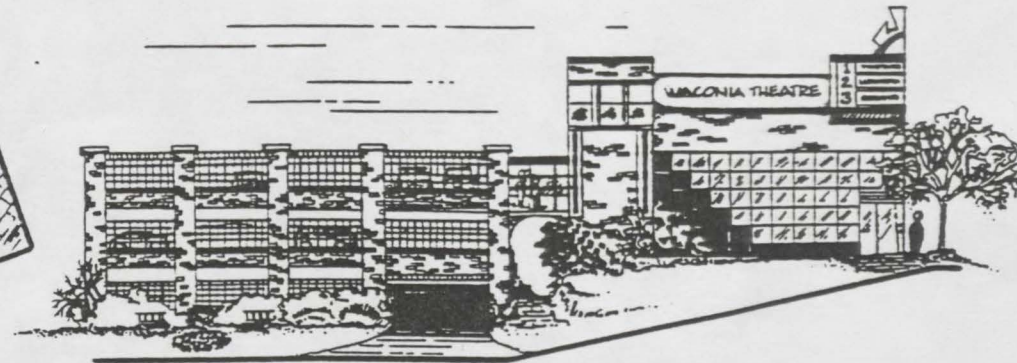
SECTION

FIRST STREET

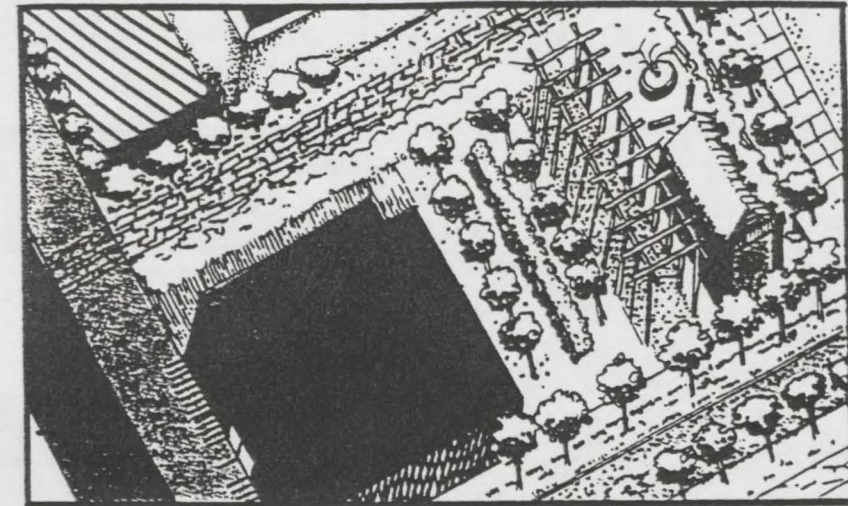
MAIN STREET



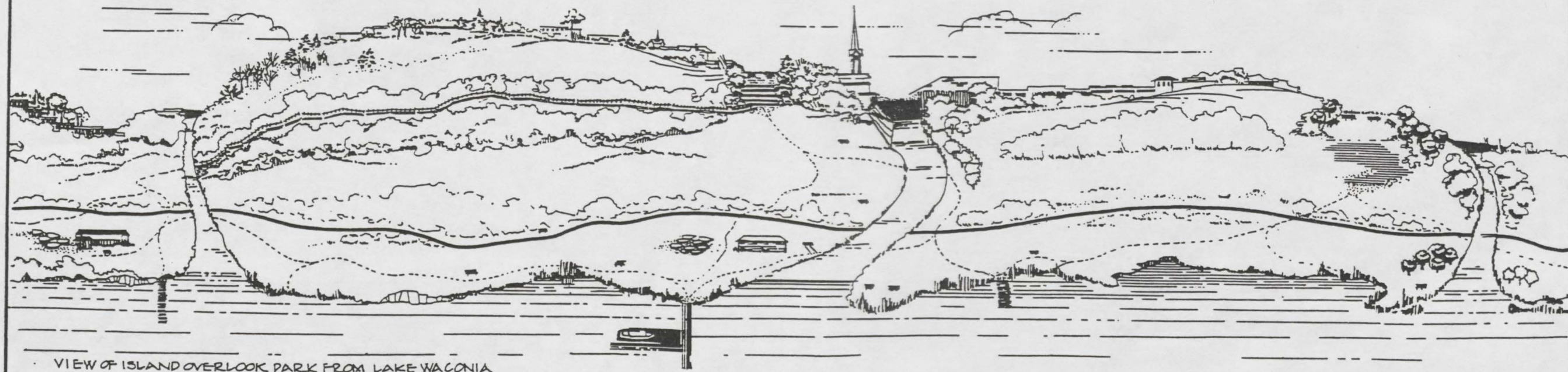
AXON OF MAIN STREET



THEATRE AND PARKING GARAGE ON OLIVE



DOWNTOWN GATHERING PLACE ON OLIVE AND FIRST STREET



VIEW OF ISLAND OVERLOOK PARK FROM LAKE WACONIA

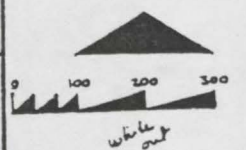
# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

## LAKE SHORE HEIGHTS

ILLUSTRATIONS



DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

FINETTE MAGNUSON



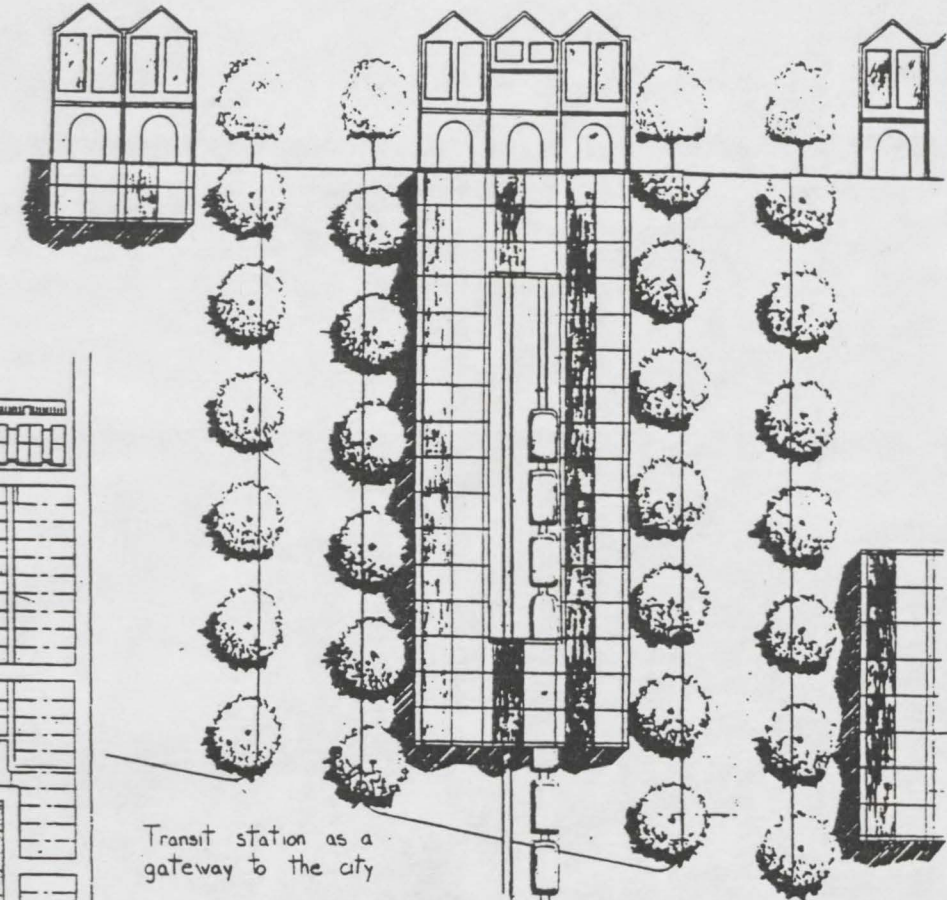
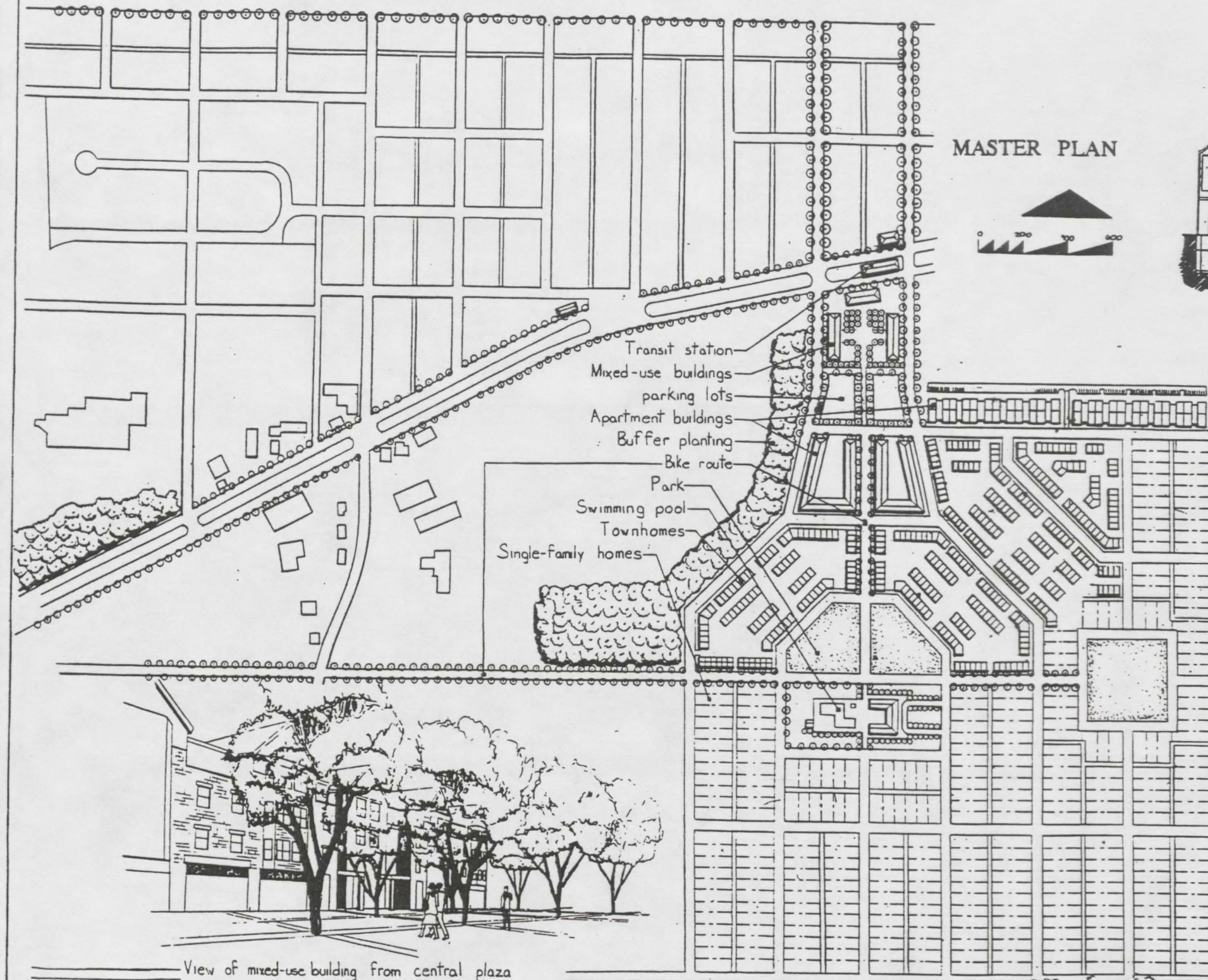
# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

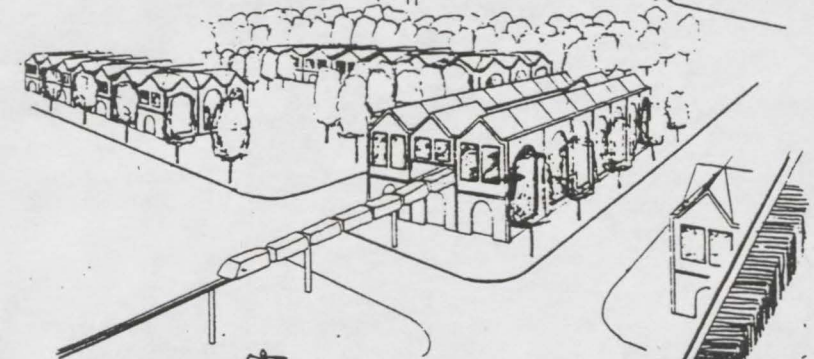
A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

# WACONIA AREA RAPID TRANSIT

## MASTER PLAN



Transit station as a gateway to the city



View of new apartment building

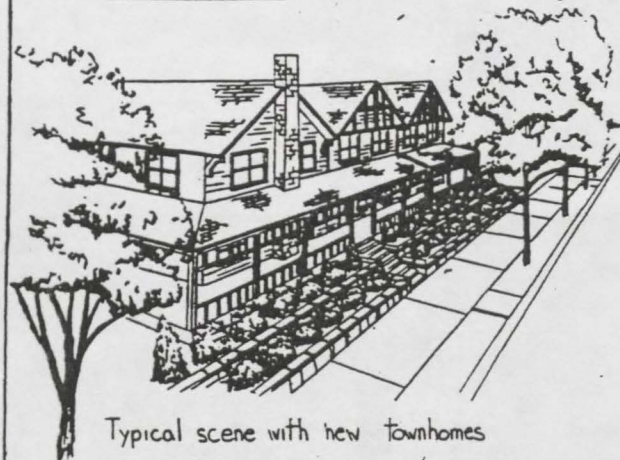
WACONIA  
YEAR 2025

DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994  
BOB NEAR

View of mixed-use building from central plaza



Typical scene with new townhomes



Alleys with ancillary units are encouraged to provide an additional affordable housing type. This also allows streets to be lined with porches for safety and appearance.

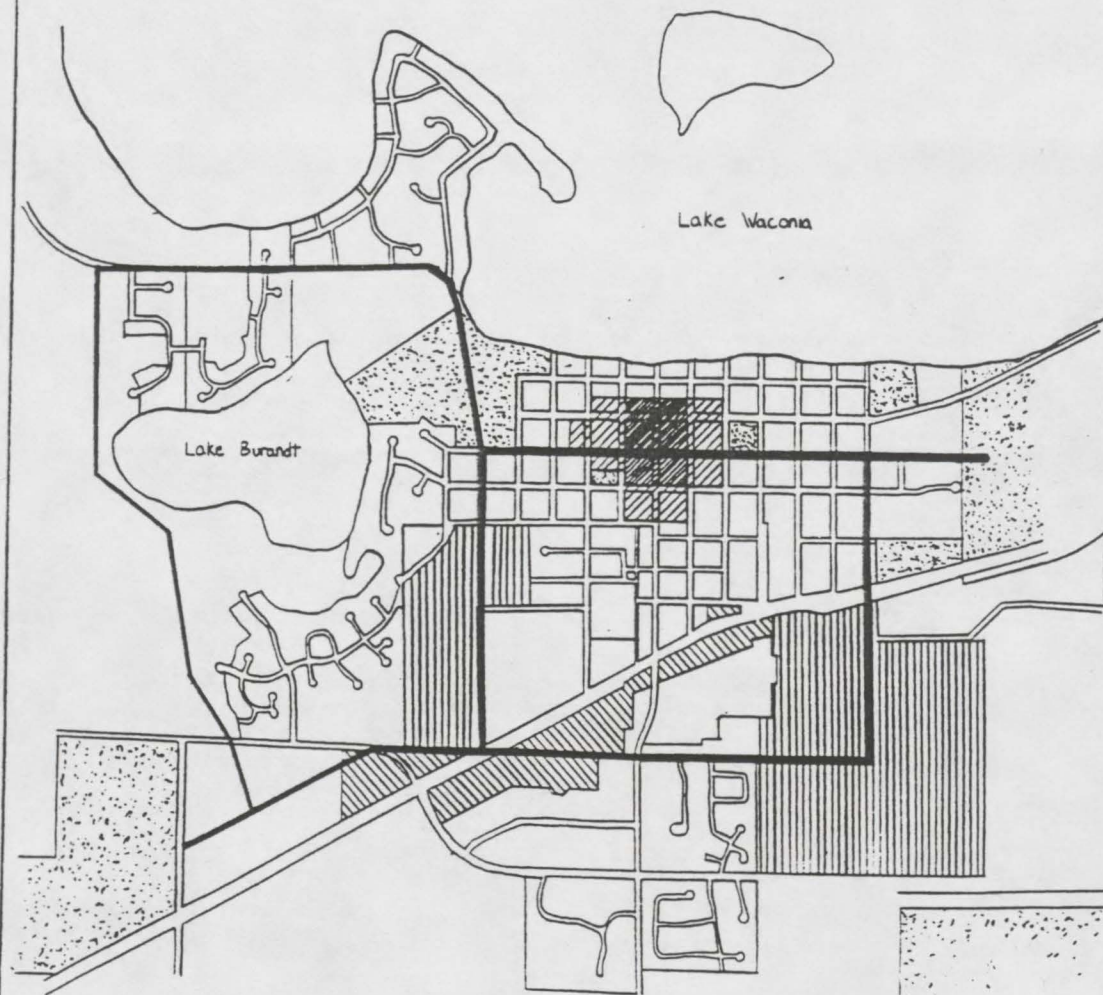
New development is designed to provide for the new type of family moving to Waconia. Many of the new people who move to the area rely on areas of Minnetonka and Eden Prairie for jobs and must commute each day. This design focuses on creating a community that can support a mass-transit system, so in the future, low and moderate income families will be able to live here as automobile prices keep rising.



Typical scene of new single family homes

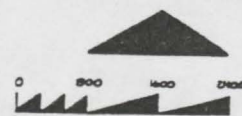


# WACONIA YEAR 2025



## SITE MAP

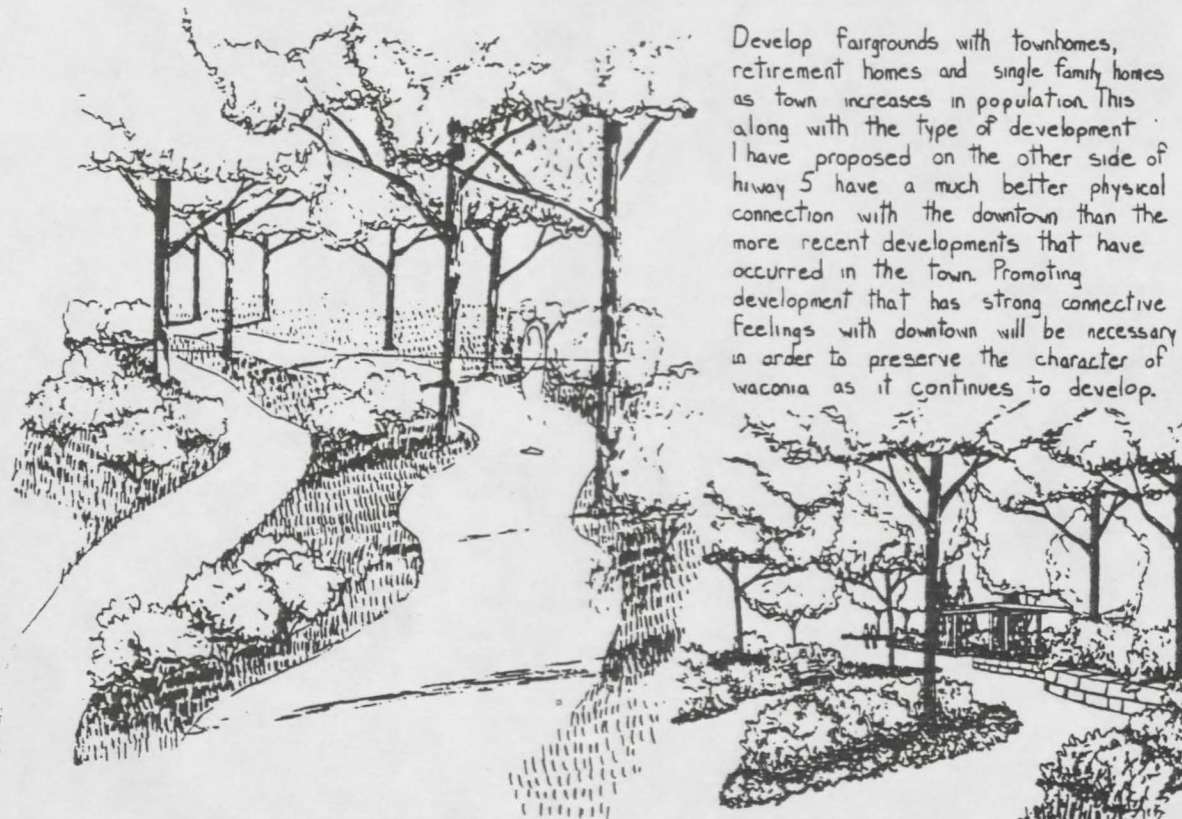
- New development areas
- Park
- Hiway business area
- Downtown core business area
- Downtown general business area
- Bicycle & walking trail system



## WART FACTS

Urbanization has caused the disappearance of 1/3 of carver counties agricultural land in the last 50 years. Population of waconia increased by 1,000 people between 1980 and 1990. Almost 400 new houses were built during the same 10 years. Orrin Thompson Homes recently purchased 100 acres just south of the new highschool on town road.

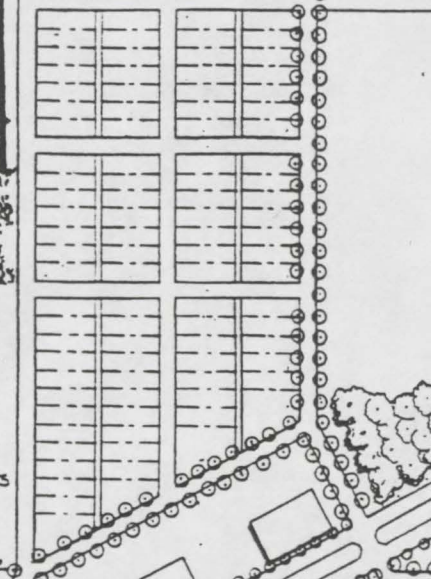
To preserve the character of waconia, future development should focus on connecting to the existing framework of waconias development. If development occurs too far from the existing downtown, people will not feel as though they are part of waconia.



Path through new fairgrounds can be used as safe bike route between new school and downtown. Following the creek from lake burandt allows for a connection with the undeveloped west end of the lake.

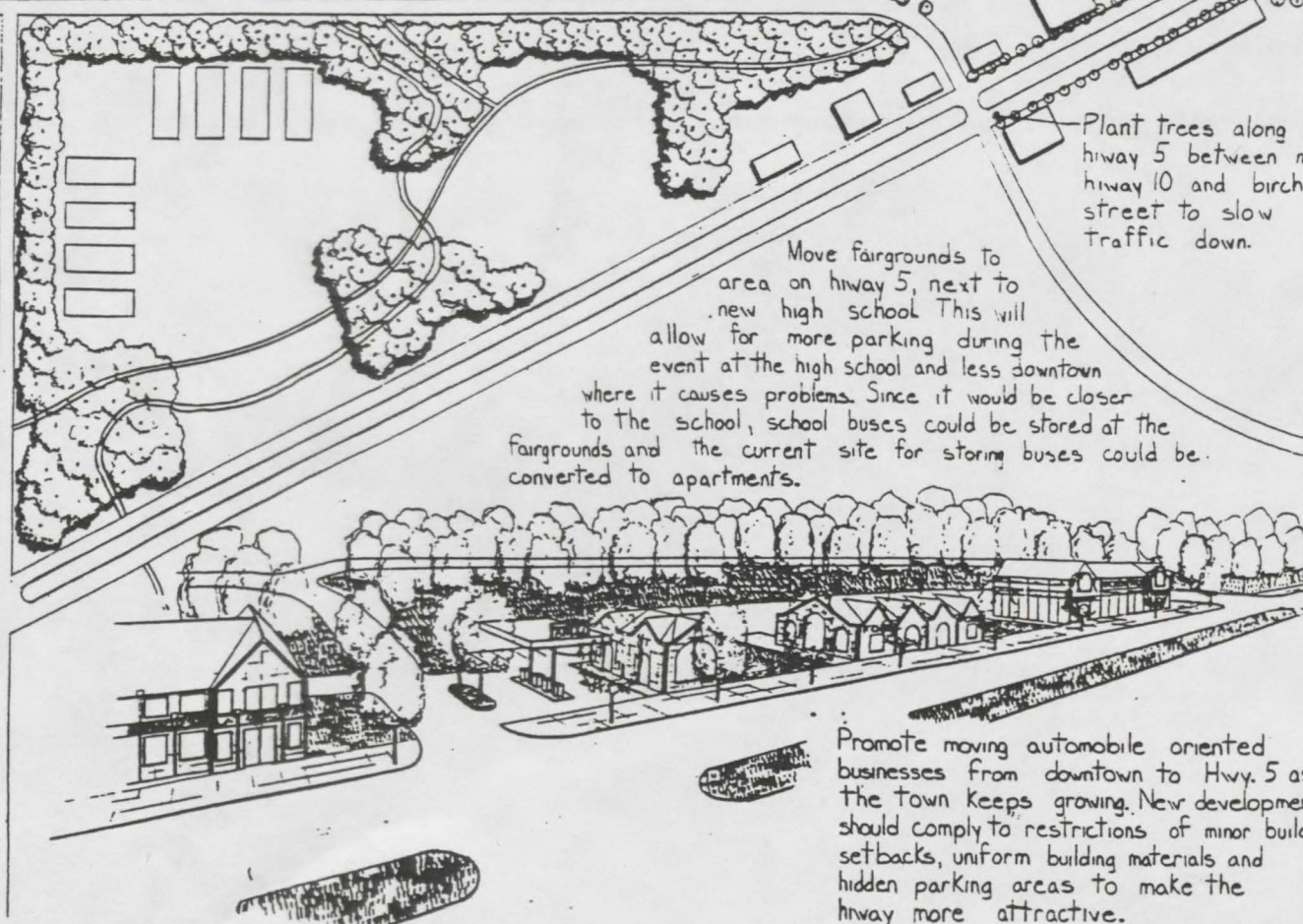
Develop fairgrounds with townhomes, retirement homes and single family homes as town increases in population. This along with the type of development I have proposed on the other side of hiway 5 have a much better physical connection with the downtown than the more recent developments that have occurred in the town. Promoting development that has strong connective feelings with downtown will be necessary in order to preserve the character of waconia as it continues to develop.

Make north end of cherry street into an important entrance to the park. This site has wonderful amenities because it borders both lake burandt and lake waconia. The hospital and retirement homes are close this, allowing for high potential of use.



Plant trees along hiway 5 between new hiway 10 and birch street to slow traffic down.

Move fairgrounds to area on hiway 5, next to new high school. This will allow for more parking during the event at the high school and less downtown where it causes problems. Since it would be closer to the school, school buses could be stored at the fairgrounds and the current site for storing buses could be converted to apartments.



Promote moving automobile oriented businesses from downtown to Hwy. 5 as the town keeps growing. New development should comply to restrictions of minor building setbacks, uniform building materials and hidden parking areas to make the hiway more attractive.

## WACONIA

### HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

WACONIA  
YEAR 2025

DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994  
BOB NEAR



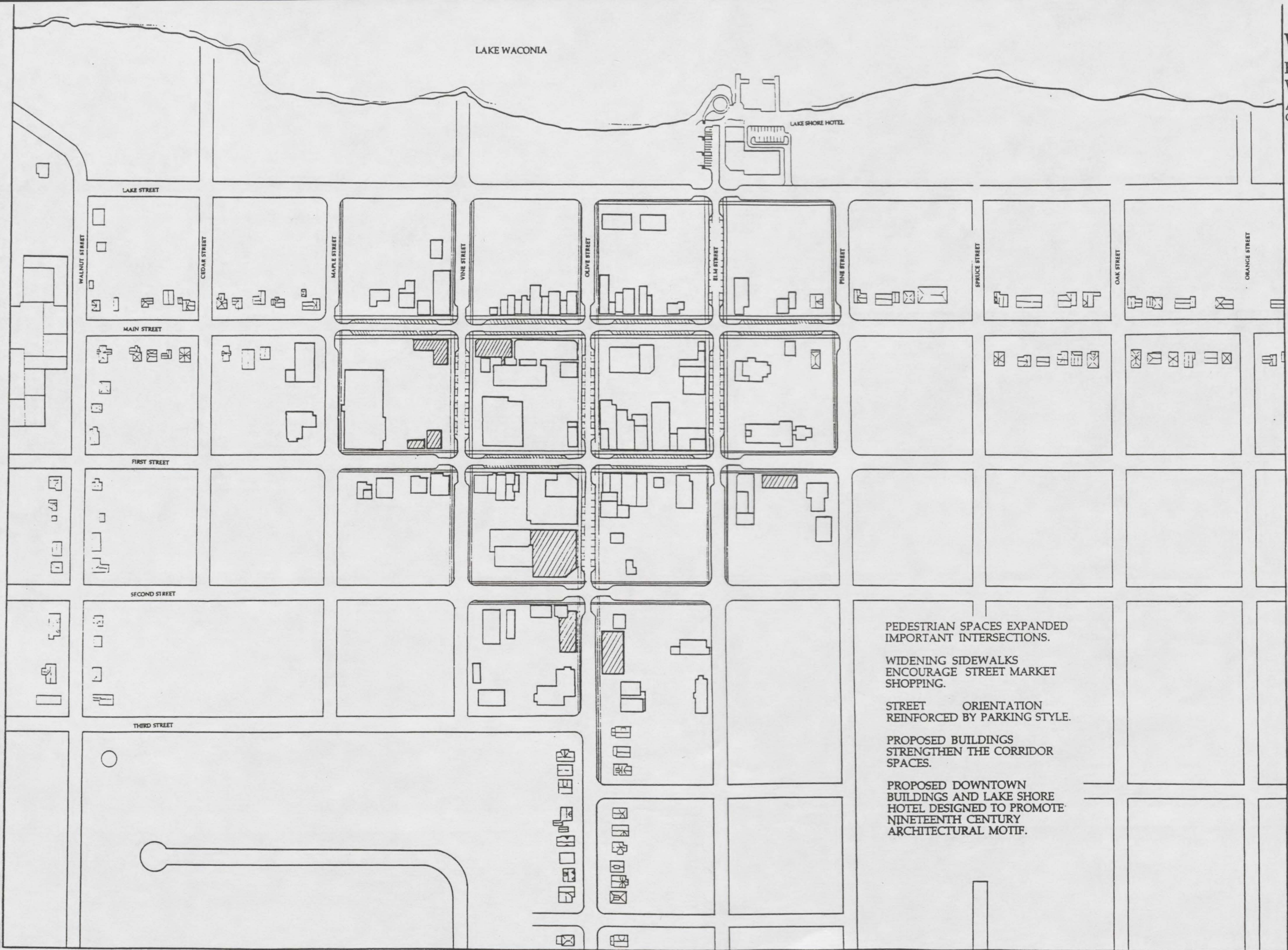
LAKE WACONIA

# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

LAKE SHORE HOTEL



Historic  
Downtown  
Waconia

HISTORIC  
DOWNTOWN  
COMMUNITY

PEDESTRIAN SPACES EXPANDED  
IMPORTANT INTERSECTIONS.

WIDENING SIDEWALKS  
ENCOURAGE STREET MARKET  
SHOPPING.

STREET ORIENTATION  
REINFORCED BY PARKING STYLE.

PROPOSED BUILDINGS  
STRENGTHEN THE CORRIDOR  
SPACES.

PROPOSED DOWNTOWN  
BUILDINGS AND LAKE SHORE  
HOTEL DESIGNED TO PROMOTE  
NINETEENTH CENTURY  
ARCHITECTURAL MOTIF.



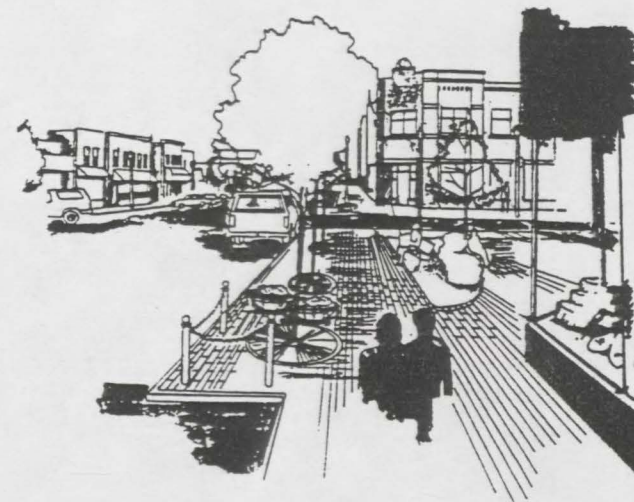
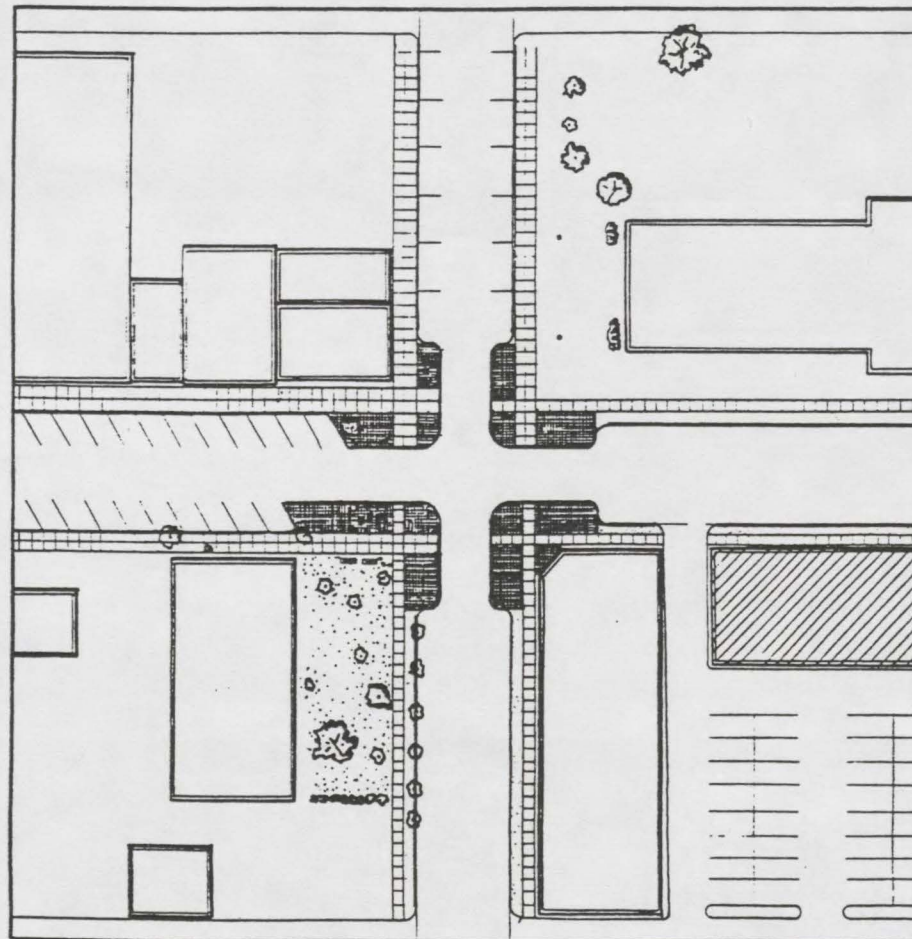
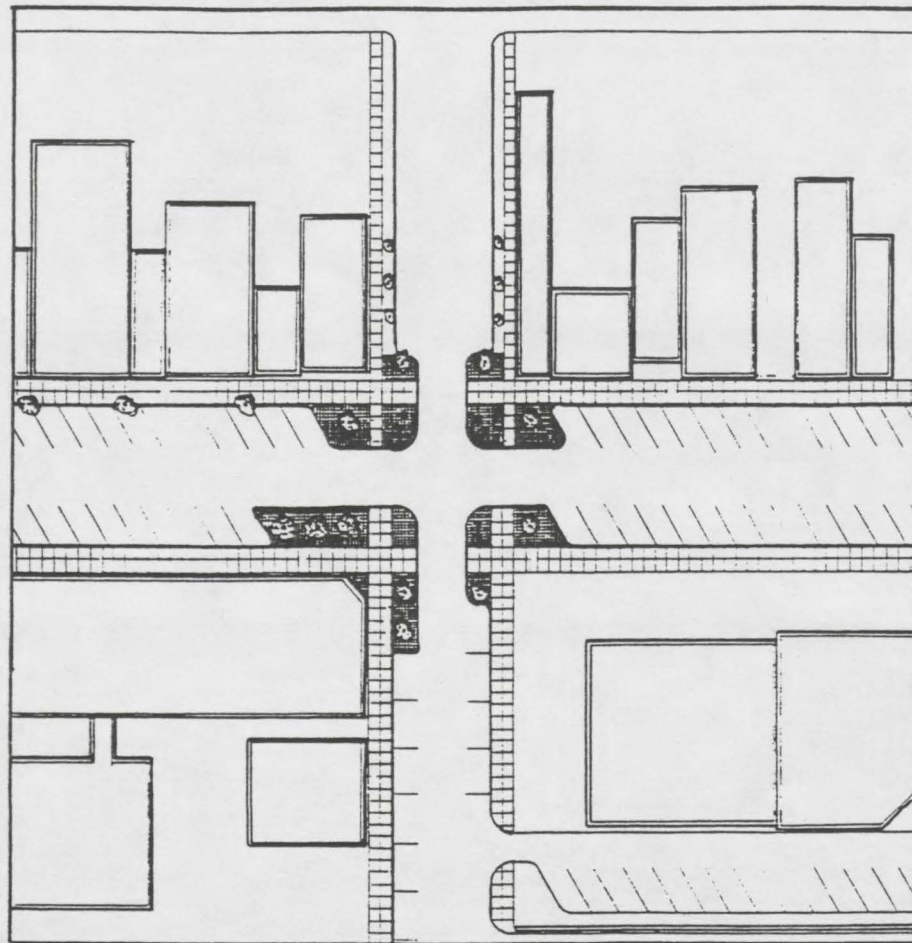
DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

ERIK OLSEN  
AARON PEARSON

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR. 1994





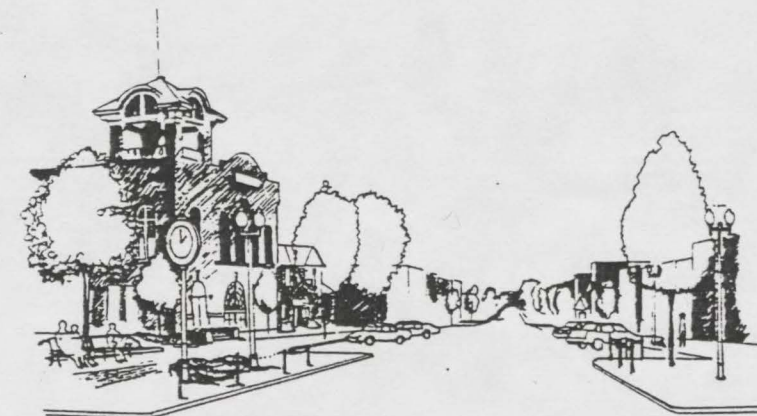
PROVIDE PLACE OF GATHERING  
IN AREAS OF HIGH COMMERCE ACTIVITY.



(NEW) CITY HALL PARK, UNITING CIVIC  
INSTITUTION WITH CIVIC SPACE. FLAGS  
FLY WITH COMMUNITY PRIDE.



PRECEDENT STREETScape USED TO HELP  
DEFINE CHARACTER OF DOWNTOWN.



HISTORIC STRUCTURES HELP DEFINE  
RECOGNIZABLE LANDMARKS IN THE  
LANDSCAPE. BOTH PEDESTRIAN AND  
VEHICLE CAN RESPOND.

# WACONIA HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

Historic  
Downtown  
Waconia

INTERSECTION OF  
MAIN STREET AND  
OLIVE STREET

INTERSECTION OF  
FIRST STREET AND  
ELM STREET



DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

ERIK OLSEN  
AARON PEARSON

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR. 1994



# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

### A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

Historic  
Downtown  
Waconia

INTERSECTION  
OF OLIVE AND  
FIRST STREET

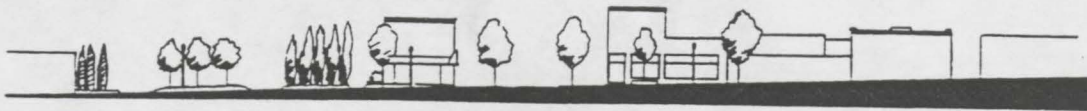


DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

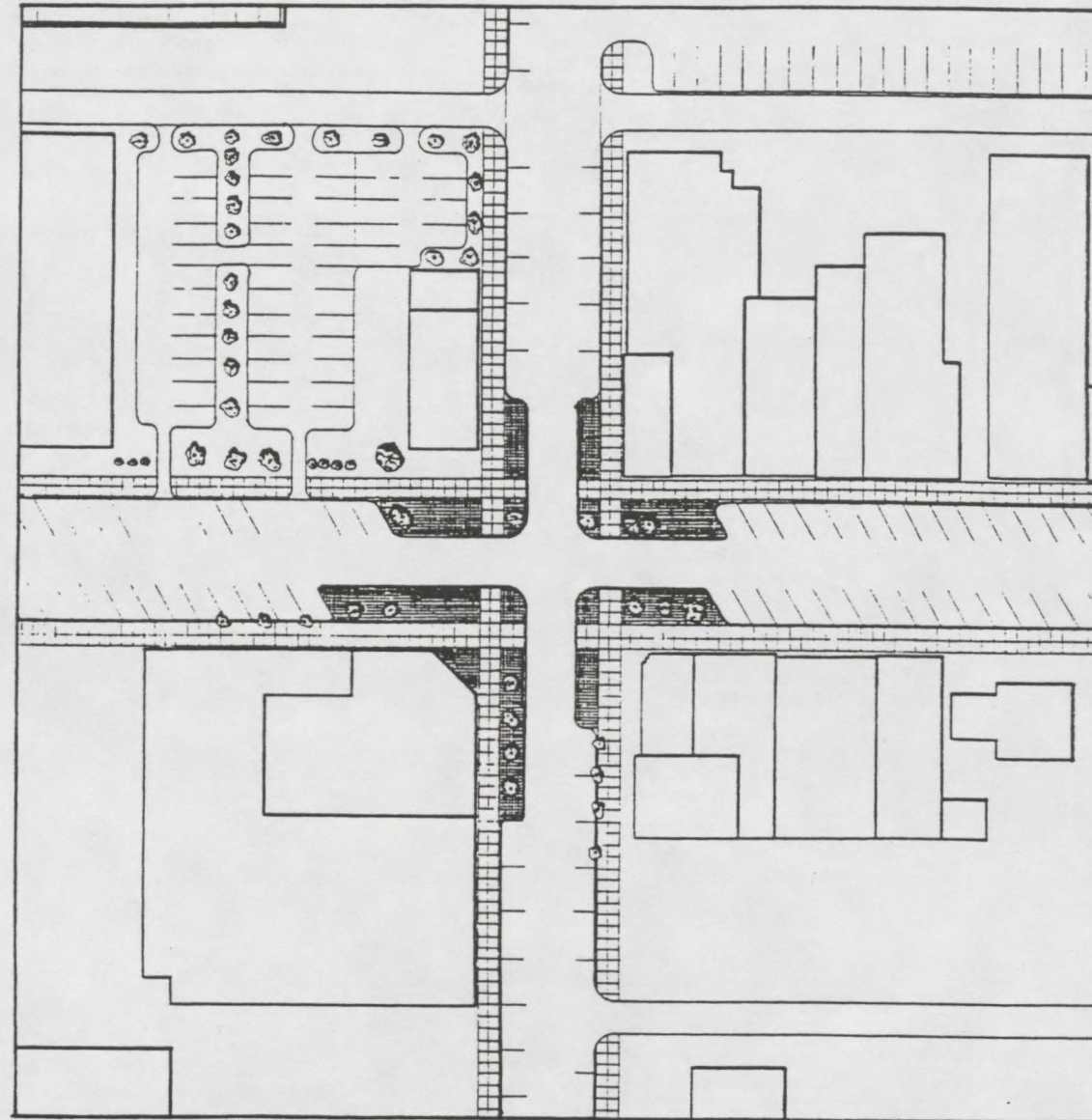
ERIK OLSEN  
AARON PEARSON

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

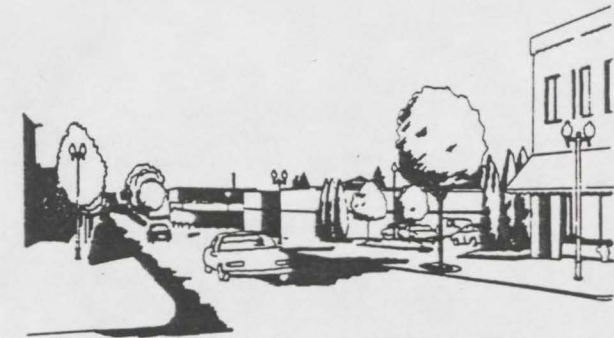
WINTER QTR. 1994



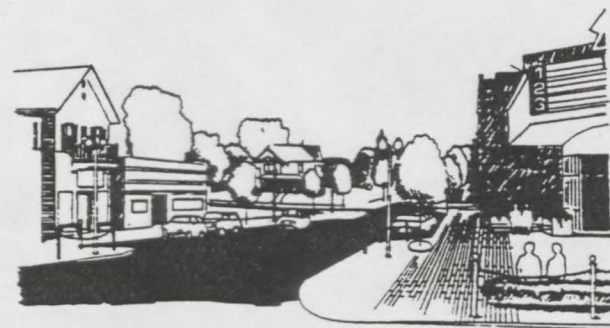
NORTH SECTION OF FIRST STREET  
AND OLIVE STREET INTERSECTION.



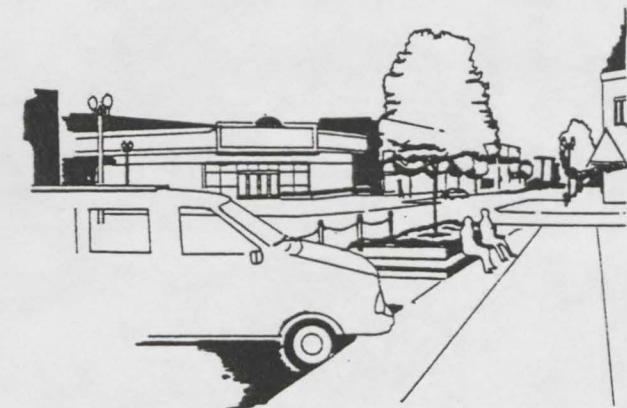
WEST SECTION OF FIRST STREET  
AND OLIVE STREET INTERSECTION.



TRANSPARENT VEGETATIVE SCREEN FOR  
PARKING LOT ALSO DEFINES PEDESTRIAN  
CORRIDORS.

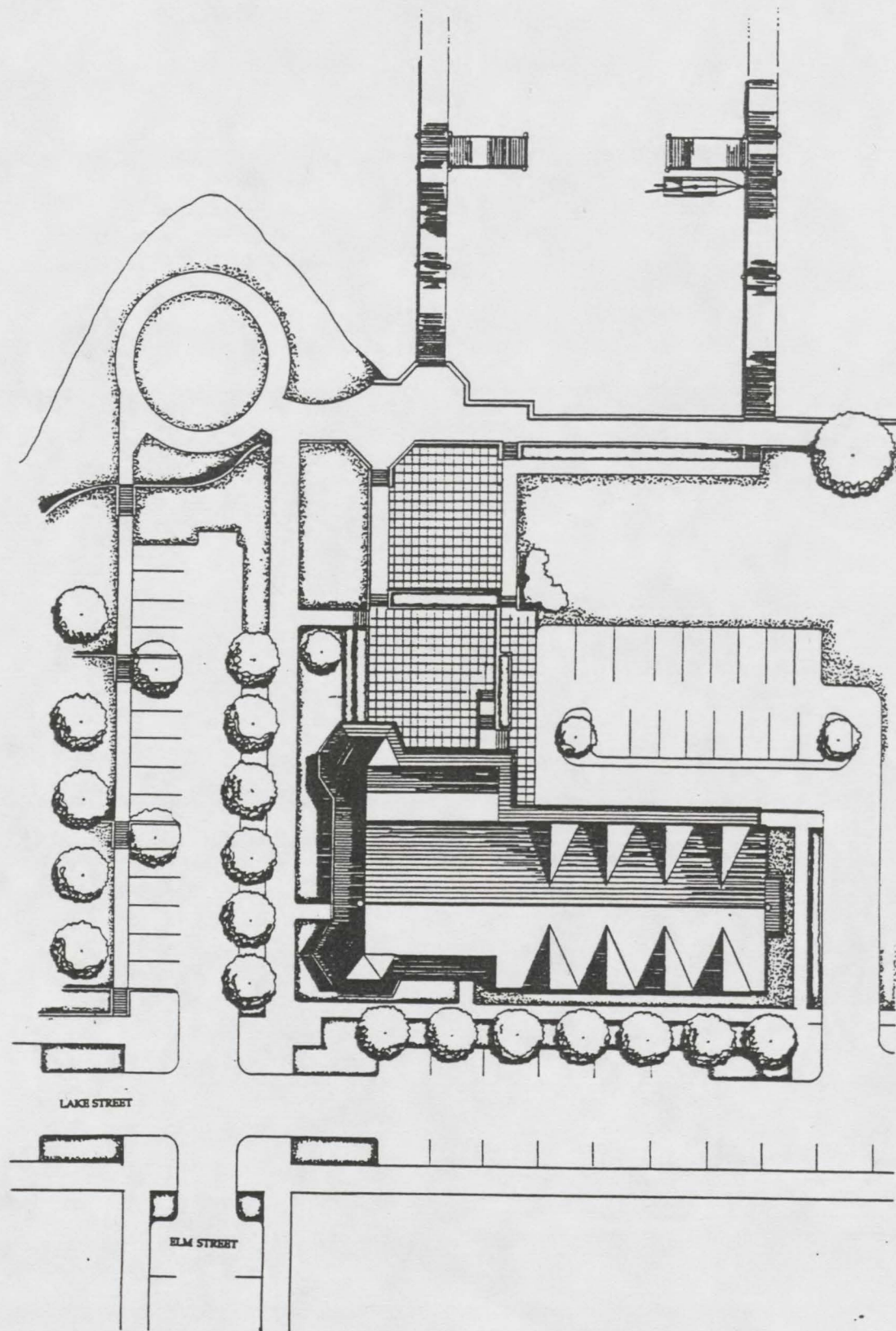


PLACES OF GATHERING PROVIDE  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL  
INTERACTION.



EXPANDED SIDEWALKS, TREES, AND  
RAISED FLOWER BEDS ADDS TO  
SOFTENING THE STREET-SCAPE MAKING  
THE DOWNTOWN MORE HABITABLE.





SOUTH ELEVATION

THE PIERS PROVIDE LAKE ACCESS FOR THE BOATING COMMUNITY, TO THE DOWNTOWN.



NORTH ELEVATION

HOTEL AND SHORELINE PARK PROVIDE COMMON GROUND FOR THE CITY AND THE LAKE.

# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

Historic  
Downtown  
Waconia

THE LAKE  
SHORE HOTEL



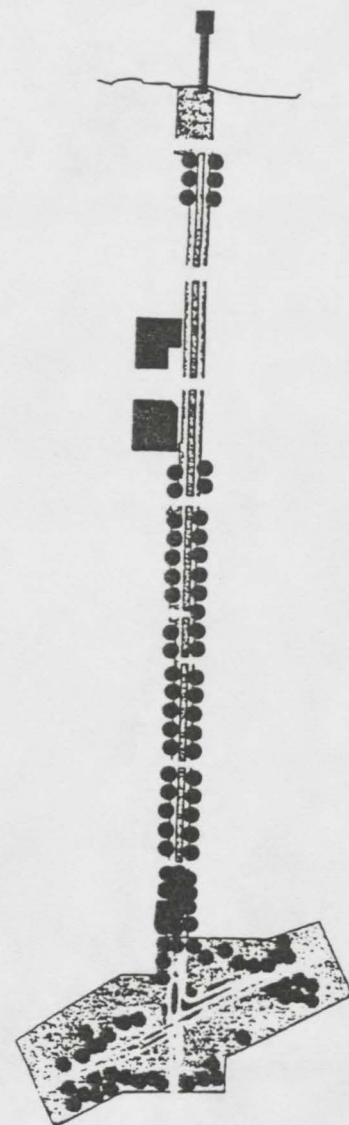
DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

ERIK OLSEN  
AARON PEARSON

LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

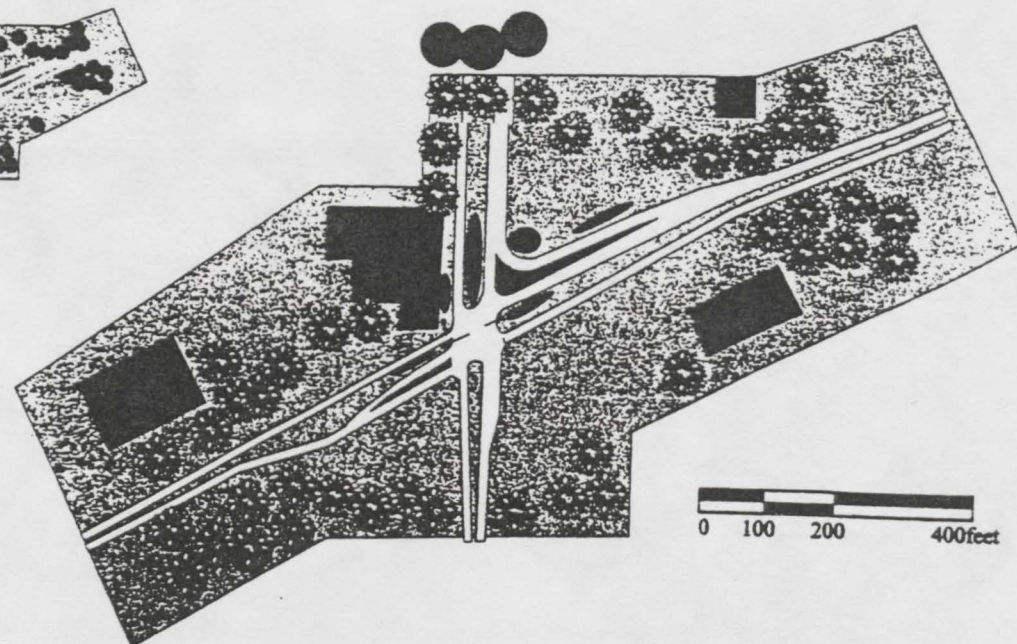
WINTER QTR. 1994





### Olive Street provides connection

From a special entrance  
at highway 5 to a public  
dock at the lake, Olive  
leads a visitor through the  
community with its grass  
median and easy access.  
to the parking ramp.



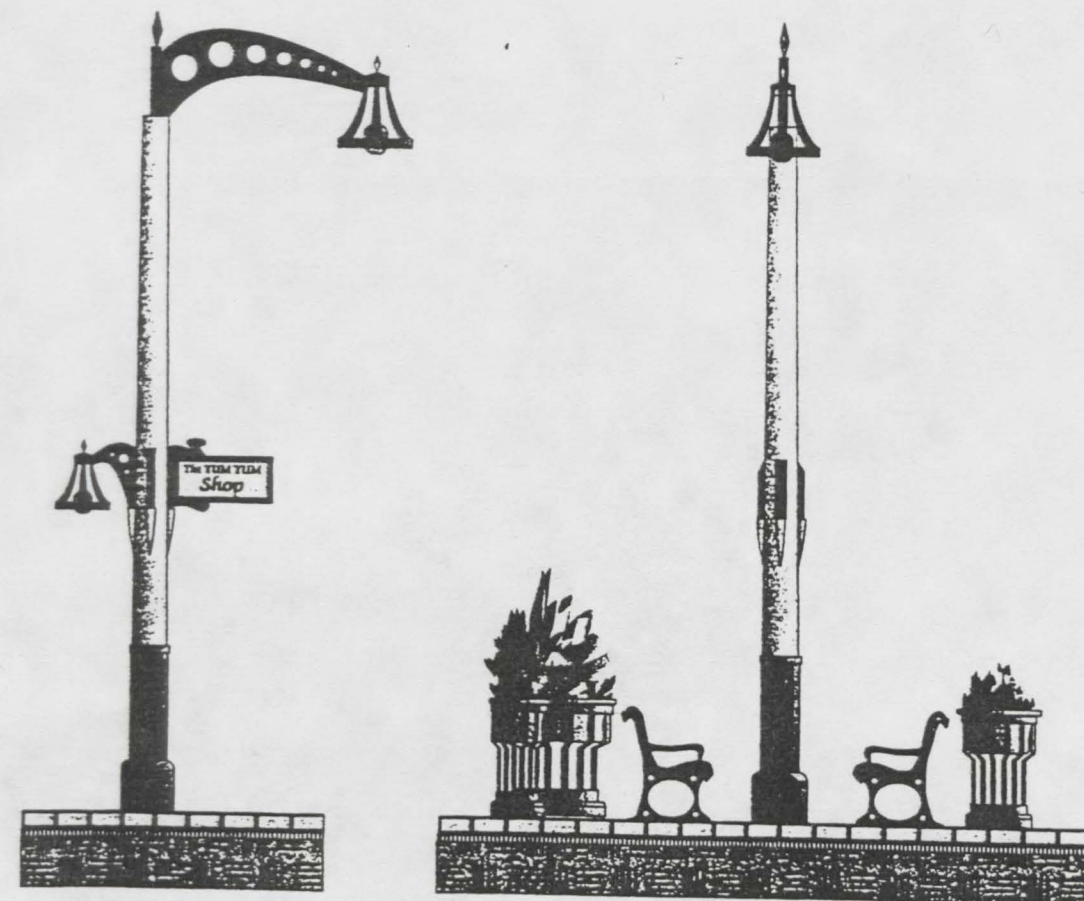
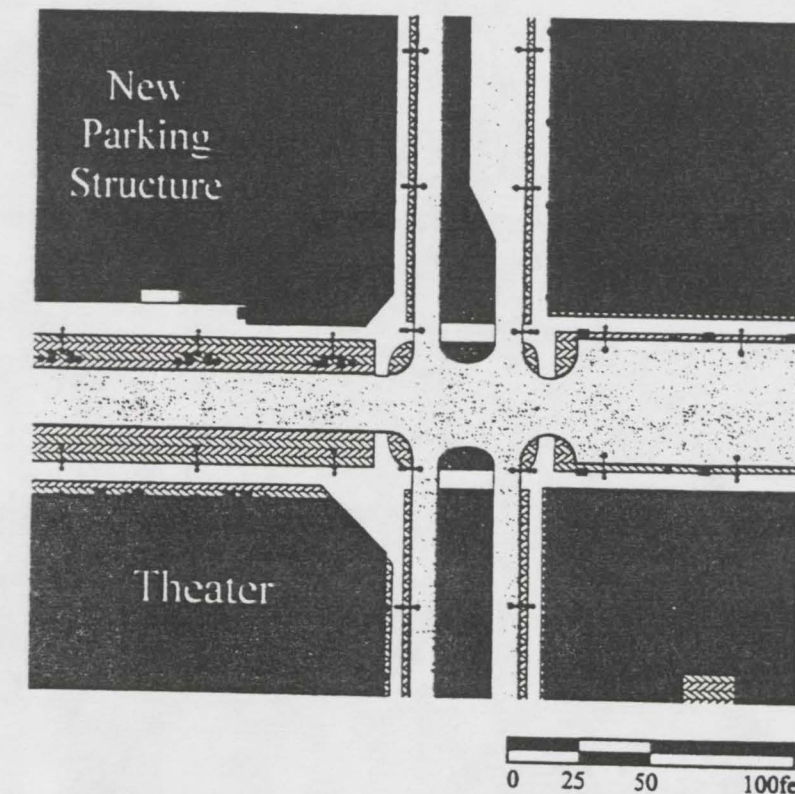
Special entrance lanes at highway 5, along with  
signage and plenty of flowers, entice passersby  
to take a closer look.

### 1st and Olive

Extra wide sidewalks between the  
theater and ramp provide an ideal  
place for many public events.

Differing pavement patterns  
provide clues as to where to  
walk and where to talk.

Benches are provided.



## WACONIA

HILLTOP TOWN  
WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

DOWNTOWN  
CONNECTIONS

STREET DETAILS  
AND THE  
OLIVE STREET  
ENTRANCE

NORTH

DEPARTMENT OF  
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ARCHITECTURE  
LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

CORY TAUER



# WACONIA

HILLTOP TOWN  
WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

DOWNTOWN  
CONNECTIONS

THE DOWNTOWN  
CLOSE-UP

NORTH

DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE  
LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

CORY TAUER

Strong connection is the key  
for a strong downtown.

Stronger connection to the highway 5.

Stronger connection to the Lake.

Stronger connection with itself.

In the Downtown

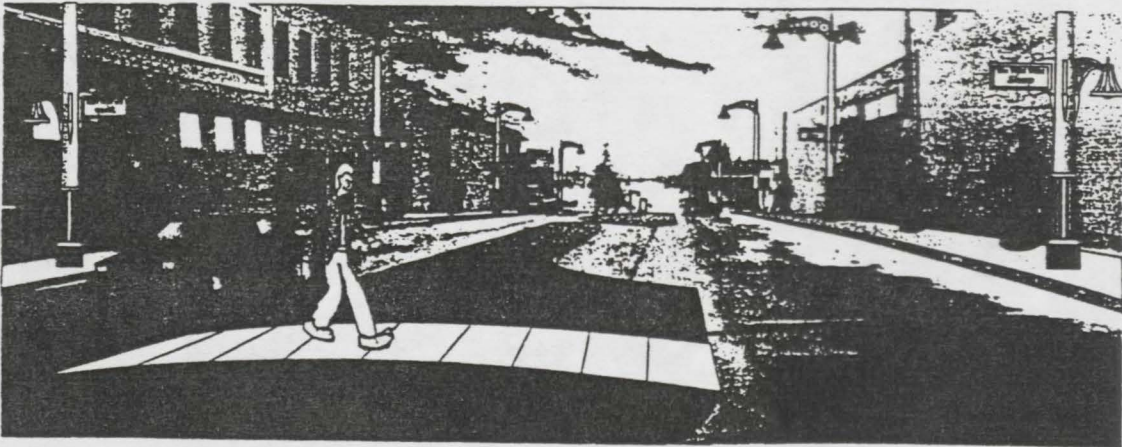
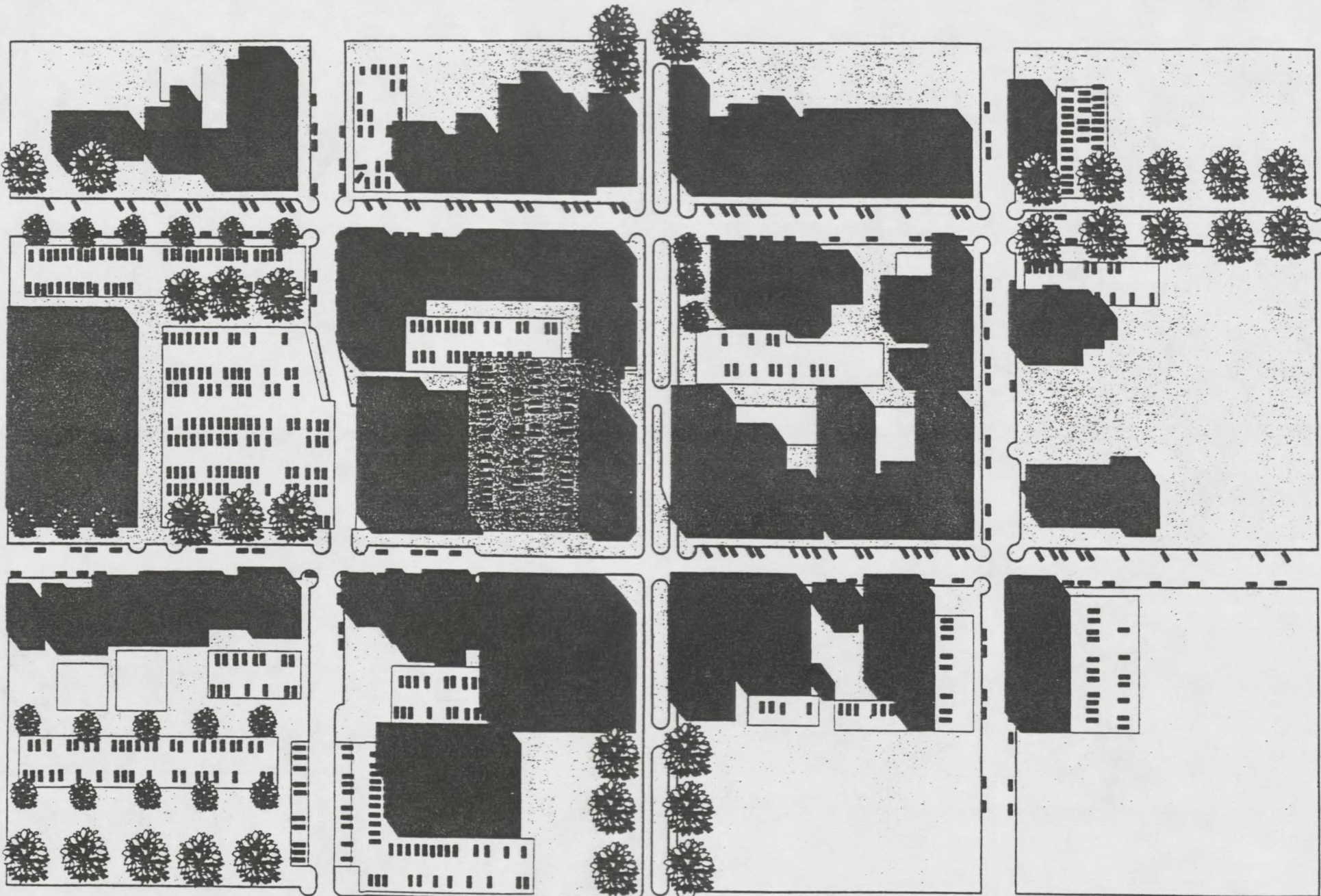
\* Use trees at the edges of downtown  
act as lush gateway.

\* Safety islands set downtown corners  
apart.

\* Harmonious street elements tie city  
blocks together.

\* A new central parking structure  
(light gray) meets need of city  
and allows for...

\*Higher density that keeps things  
vital and encourages new buildings  
(dark gray) to fill in empty street  
fronts.



A View north toward the lake  
on Olive Street from the  
center of downtown.



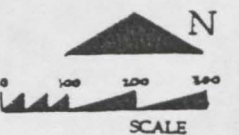
# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

### VETERANS SQUARE

CIVIC SPACE

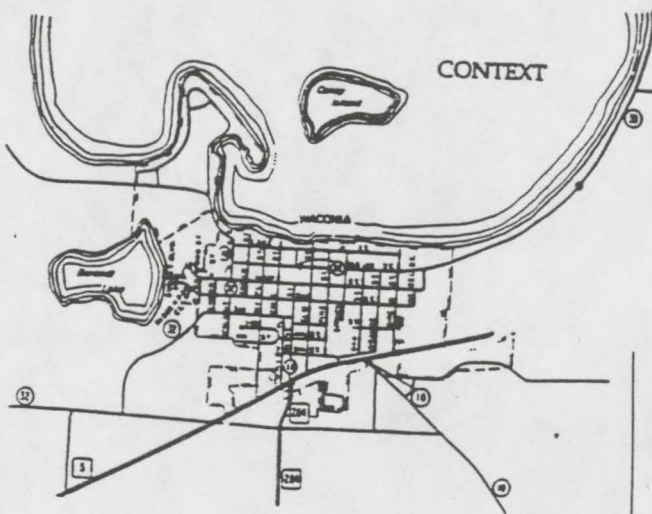


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LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 8272 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

STEVEN WHITE



CONTEXT

LAKE

PLAN

LAKE ST.

MAIN ST.

NEW BUILDING

MAIN & ELM NORTH VIEW

FIRST ST.

SECOND ST

OLIVE ST.

ELM ST.

MAPLE ST.

VIN ST.

### GOALS

REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN

DEFINE DOWNTOWN AREA  
FOCUS DEVELOPMENT  
INCREASE HOUSING DENSITY

MAINTAIN CITY CHARACTER

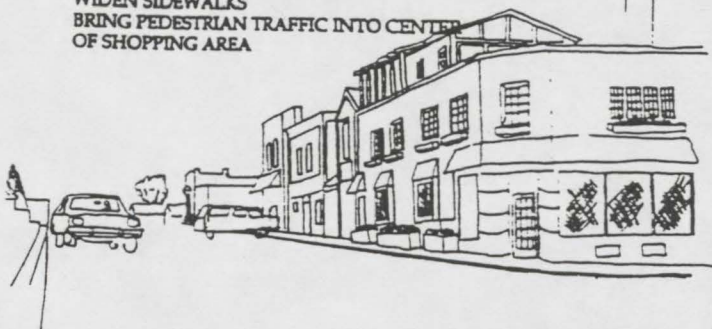
CONTINUE GRID INTO EXPANSION AREAS

CONNECT DOWNTOWN TO LAKE

ELEVATION CHANGE ALLOWS VISUAL  
CONTACT FROM MAIN ST.  
ESTABLISH PARK AT END OF ELM ST.

MAKE SHOPPING DISTRICT  
PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY

WIDEN SIDEWALKS  
BRING PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC INTO CENTER  
OF SHOPPING AREA



MAIN & ELM SOUTH VIEW



THE CITY NEEDS TO ESTABLISH  
A LONG RANGE DOWNTOWN  
PLAN.

THIS PLAN SHOULD DEAL WITH ISSUES RELATED TO:  
BUSINESS FOCUS, PUBLIC SPACE,  
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE OF NEW  
BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

OVER TIME THESE ISSUES CAN  
BE SUCCESSFULLY INTEGRATED  
INTO A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN.

SECTION

LAKE VIEW OPPORTUNITIES ALONG MAIN ST.

LAKE LEVEL



# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF GATHERING PLACE

### VETERANS SQUARE

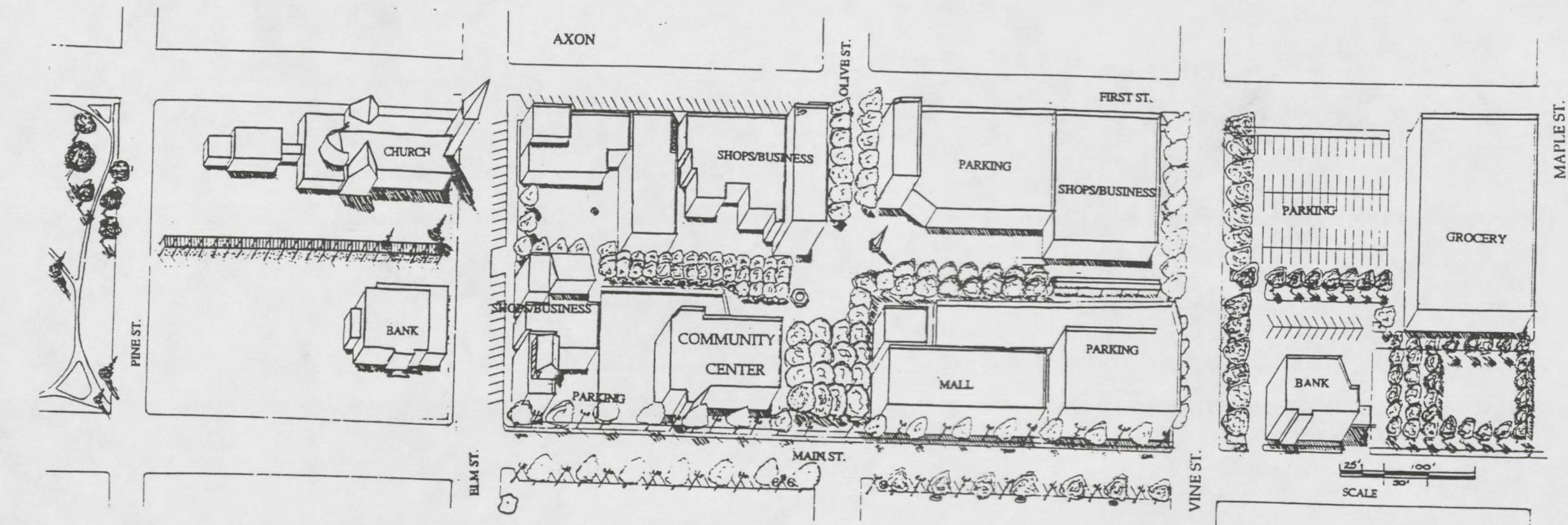
CIVIC SPACES

DEPARTMENT OF  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTURE

LA 822 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

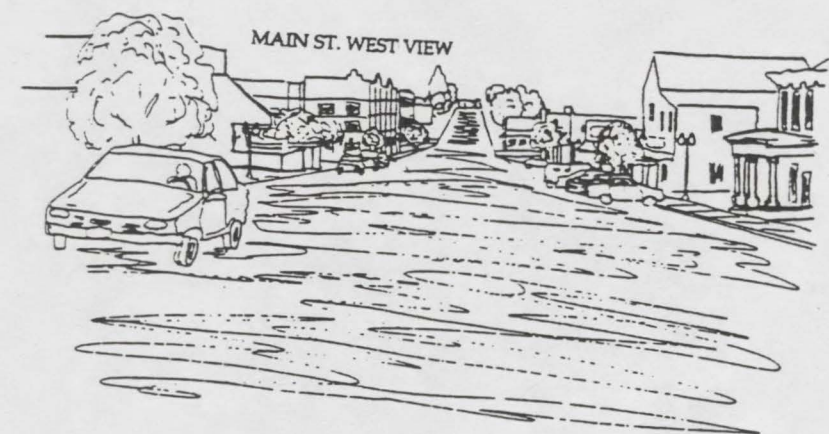
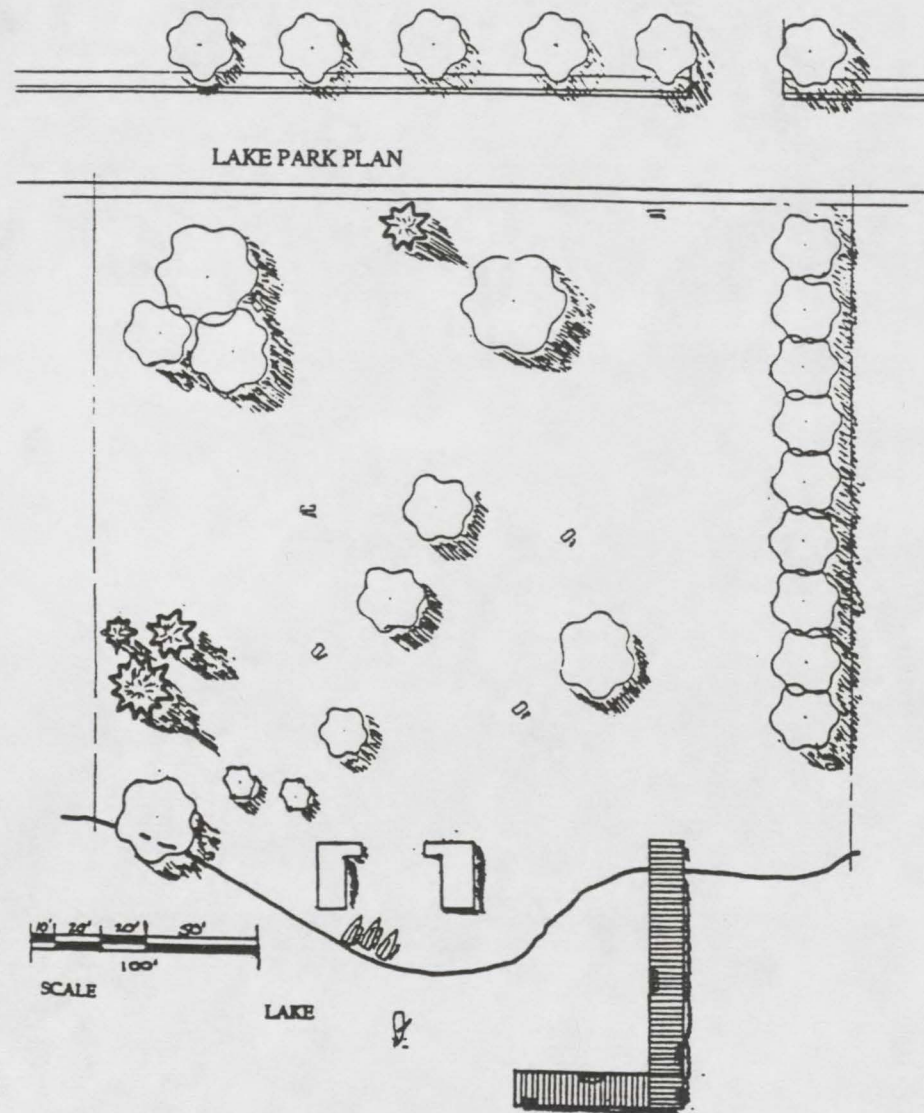
WINTER QTR 1994

STEVEN WHITE



#### REQUIREMENTS

- PLACES FOR WALKING
- COMFORT
- DEFINITION
- TRANSPARENCY
- COMPLEMENTARY SIZE
- MAINTENANCE
- CONSTRUCTION QUALITY



ELEVATION MAIN ST.  
BUILDINGS ALONG MAIN AND FIRST ST SHOULD ENGAGE STREET  
LIGHT FIXTURES AND TREES DEFINE PEDESTRIAN SPACE



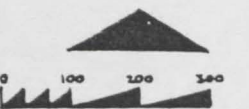
# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

OPEN SPACE  
CORRIDOR

MASTER PLAN  
OF  
DOWNTOWN

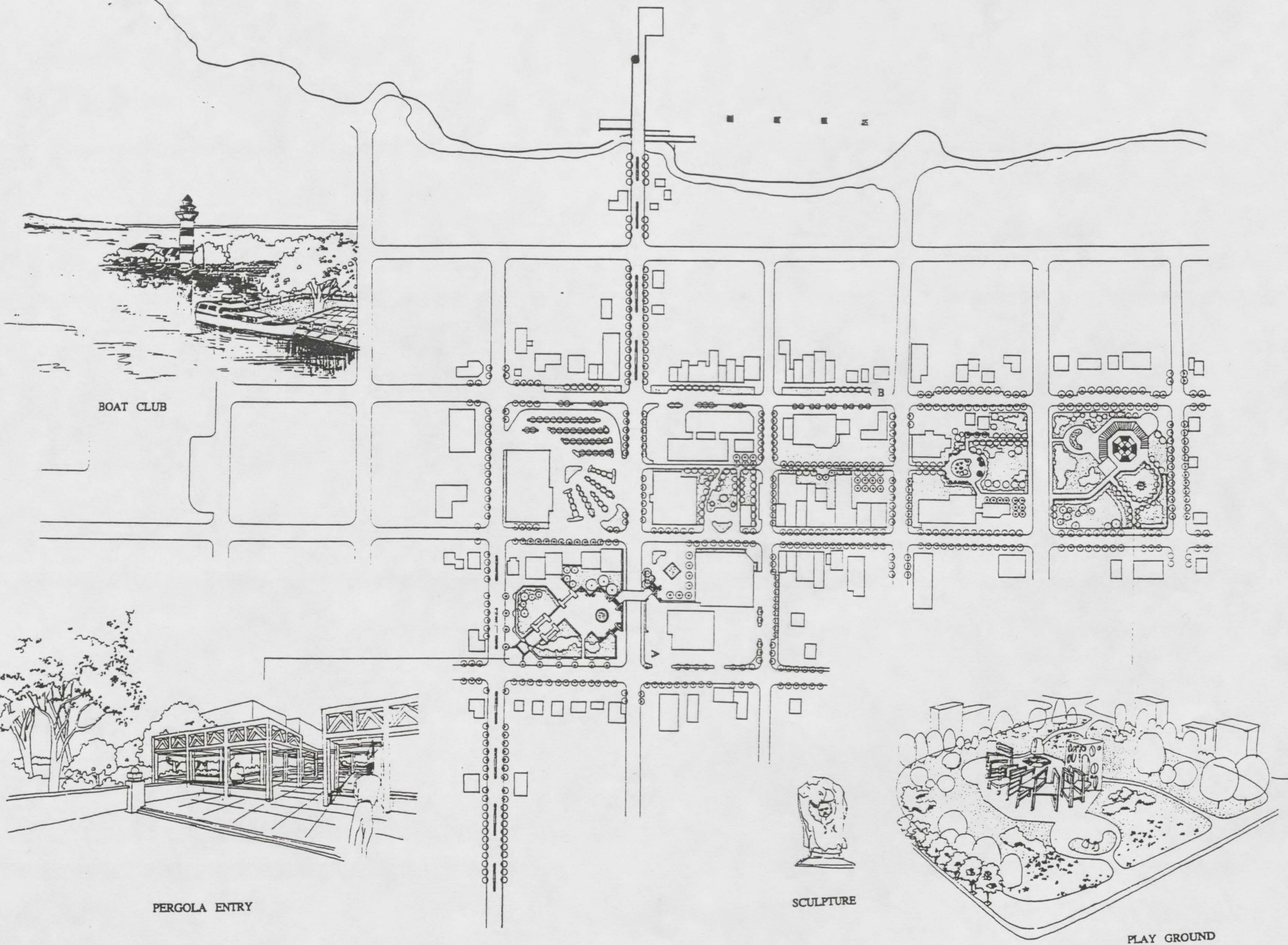


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LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

MING ZHONG





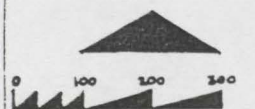
# WACONIA

## HILLTOP TOWN WITH A VIEW

A STUDY OF  
GATHERING PLACE

### OPEN SPACE CORRIDOR

C.S.E.P DRAWINGS

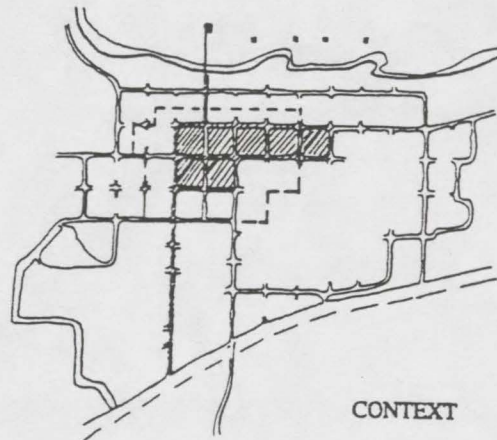


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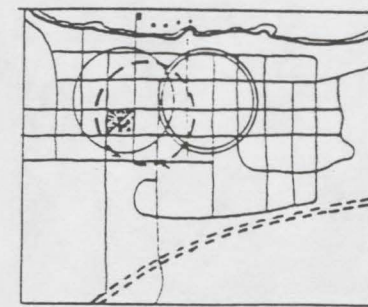
LA 8222 DESIGN OF  
GATHERING PLACE

WINTER QTR 1994

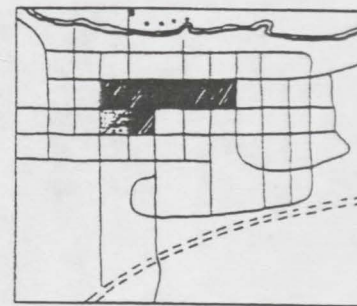
MING ZHONG



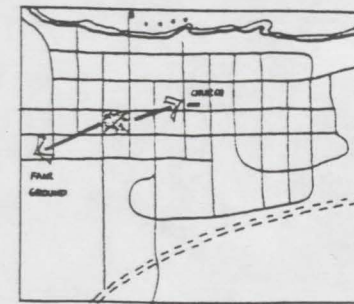
CONTEXT



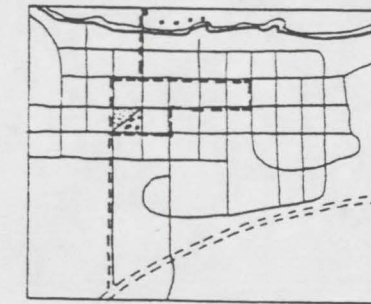
WALKING DISTANCE



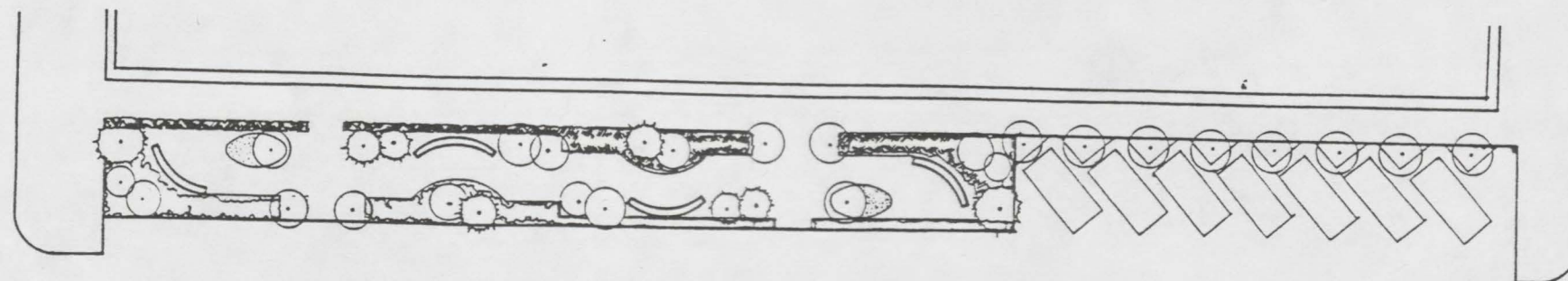
COMMERCIAL + PUBLIC AREA



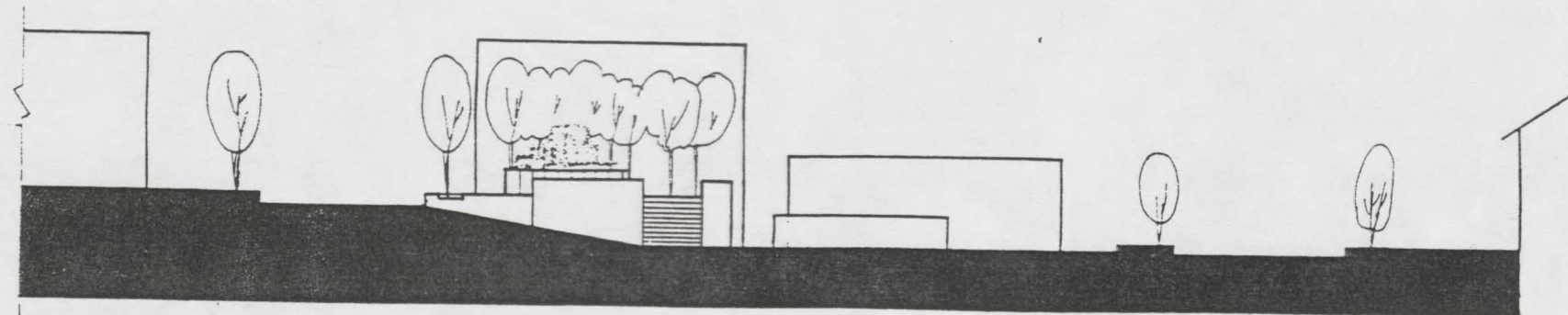
VISUAL QUALITY



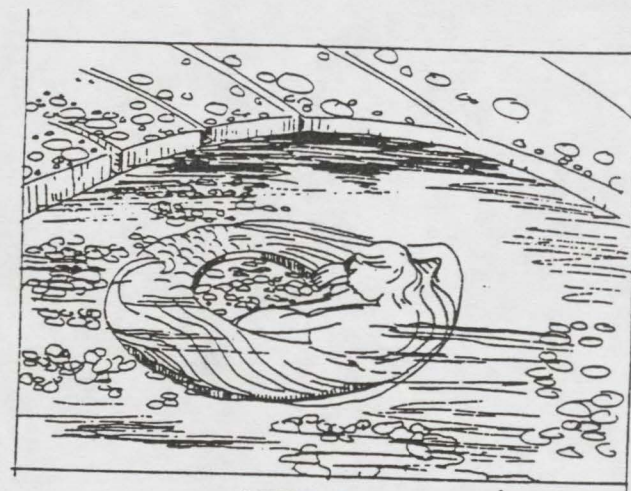
CIRCULATION



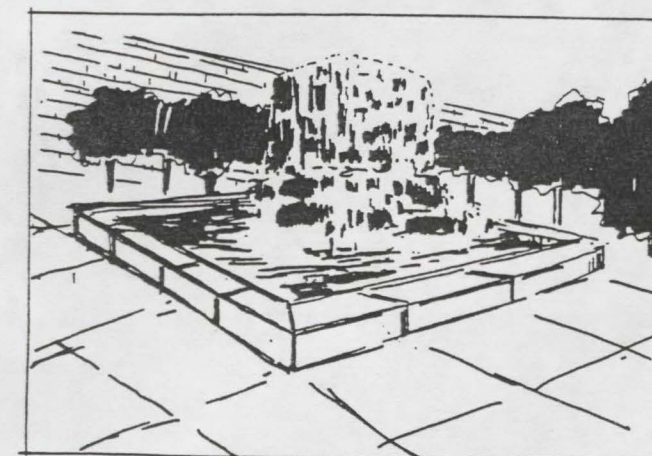
SECTION B



SECTION AND ELEVATION A



MERMAID POOL



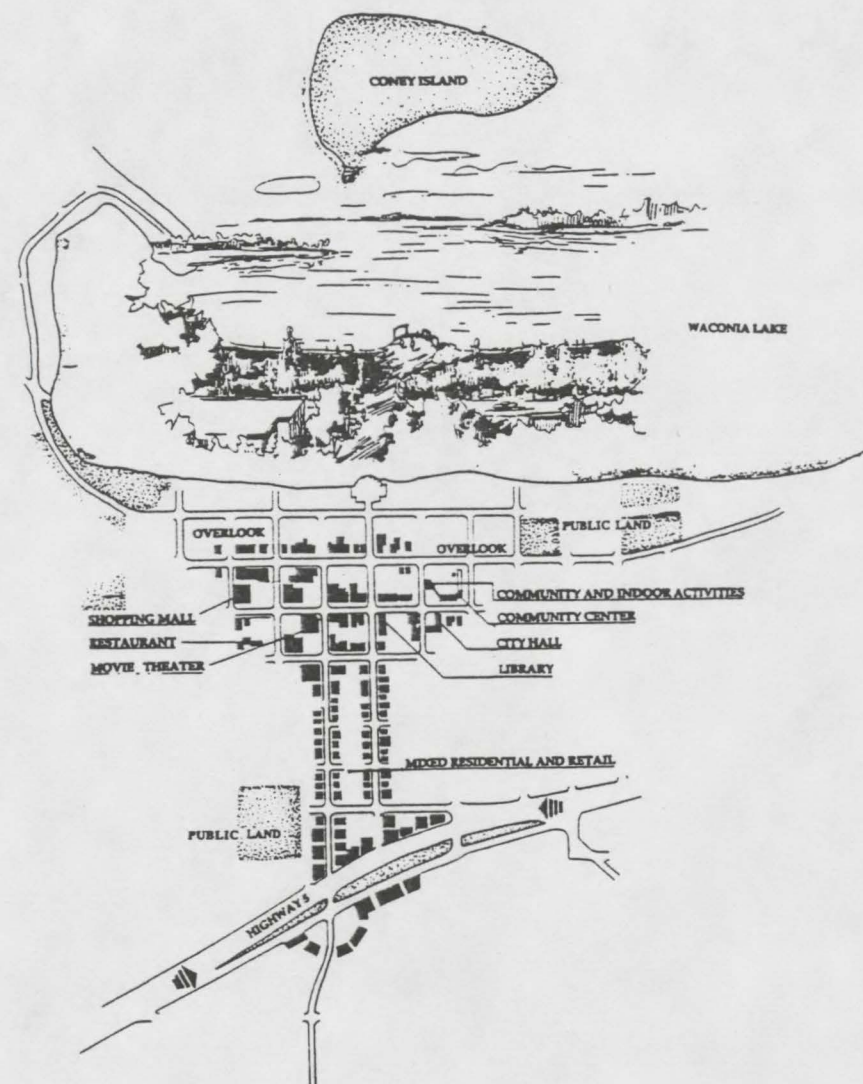
SQUARE FOUNTAIN

### DESIGN INTENT

The "open space corridor" is designed for Waconia's downtown business district. It consists of six design items: two major streets, two parks, one plaza, one parking lot, one boat club, and one green walk between the two major streets. The parks, plaza, and parking lot are connected by the two streets shaping a green loop which has its own integrity. The boat club located on the shore of Lake Waconia has its symbol, a lighthouse, to provide a psychological connection between downtown and the lake. The total amount of designed space is about 40,000 square feet.

The design intent is primarily to provide space to encourage people, especially the elderly and children, to engage in more outdoor activities. The second intent is to create a green space system to increase the integrity of downtown as a pleasant and memorable place that keeps residents happy, attracts more outsiders to visit the town, and invites more newcomers to become residents. Third, responding to the suggestion that physical environment affects and/or encourages certain behaviors, the design intent of the "open space corridor" is also to make a designed environment become a setting for human behaviors that are socially appropriate. Finally, the corridor proposal will hopefully encourage Waconia decision makers to do further research into design ideas for their downtown and to do this research soon.





#### Credits:

Many people have contributed to the effort that has brought these pages into being. Tom Whitlock, a 1993 Bachelor of Landscape Architecture graduate of the University of Minnesota, did as his spring 1993 thesis a proposal for Coney Island in Lake Waconia, a proposal that recognized links between the island and Waconia's downtown. Picking up on that proposal, Nancy Lenhart of the Minnesota Extension Service and El Vaughn Williams of Waconia Horizons, working through Randy Cantrell and Barbara Lukermann of the University's Humphrey Institute, made contact with Roger Clemence, Collegiate Program Leader for the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the U. and Roger Martin, Professor of Landscape Architecture in that college. The two Rogers then became the link to thirteen students of landscape architectural design who were able to devote five weeks of their 1994 winter quarter to the community-serving effort which has led to the products found on these pages.

Supporting this effort with time, dedicated participation at community reviews, and a financial commitment to the publication process were the Waconia Horizons Community Development Board including:

- Kim Mackenthun, Mackenthun Super Market, Chair
- Paul Melchert, Melchert, Hubert, Sjodin and Willemssen
- Dave Bergmann, Laketown Electric
- Roger Wichelman, First National Bank
- John Devins, Ridgeview Medical Center
- El Vaughn Williams, Executive Director

Also directly involved as proposal reviewers were government officials:

- Jon Hilgers, Waconia City Planner
- Wendy Kuntz, Waconia City Councilperson
- John Hoese, Carver County Commissioner

Carver County Fair Board members:

- Jan Albrecht, Carver County Agricultural Society
- Dale Rademacher, Carver County Agricultural Society

There were also a number of community residents who participated and made suggestions in community meetings. These participants included the following public school students:

- Leslie Litfin, Elementary
- Courtney Hanson, Elementary
- Elizabeth Boebke, Middle School
- Molly Bailey, High School
- Matt Kusilek, High School
- Dawn Symanietz, High School
- Andy Kerber, High School

and a number of other people from the community including:

- Kathy Oliphant, Waconia Elementary School Teacher
- Paul Johnston and Keith Peters, State Bank Representatives
- Barbara Weiss, Realtor
- Cindy Mace, In Towne Marina
- Chuck Dueber, Dueber's Dept. Store
- Bonnie Deardorf, Deardorf Orchards
- Cliff Stahlke, NSP
- Tim Litfin, District 110 Community Education Director
- Darrel & Joanne Sudheimer, D & J Furniture
- Dan & Darlene Roth, Welcome Neighbor
- Mark Lindberg
- Gary Hittle
- Mary Schuler
- Marge Laufenburger
- Tom Royce
- Wendy Szczepanski
- Linda Roebke
- Alice Lindner
- Nancy Lenhart, Minnesota Extension Service-Carver County
- Tom Whitlock, Damon Farber Architects
- Keith Anderson, Waconia Patriot

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